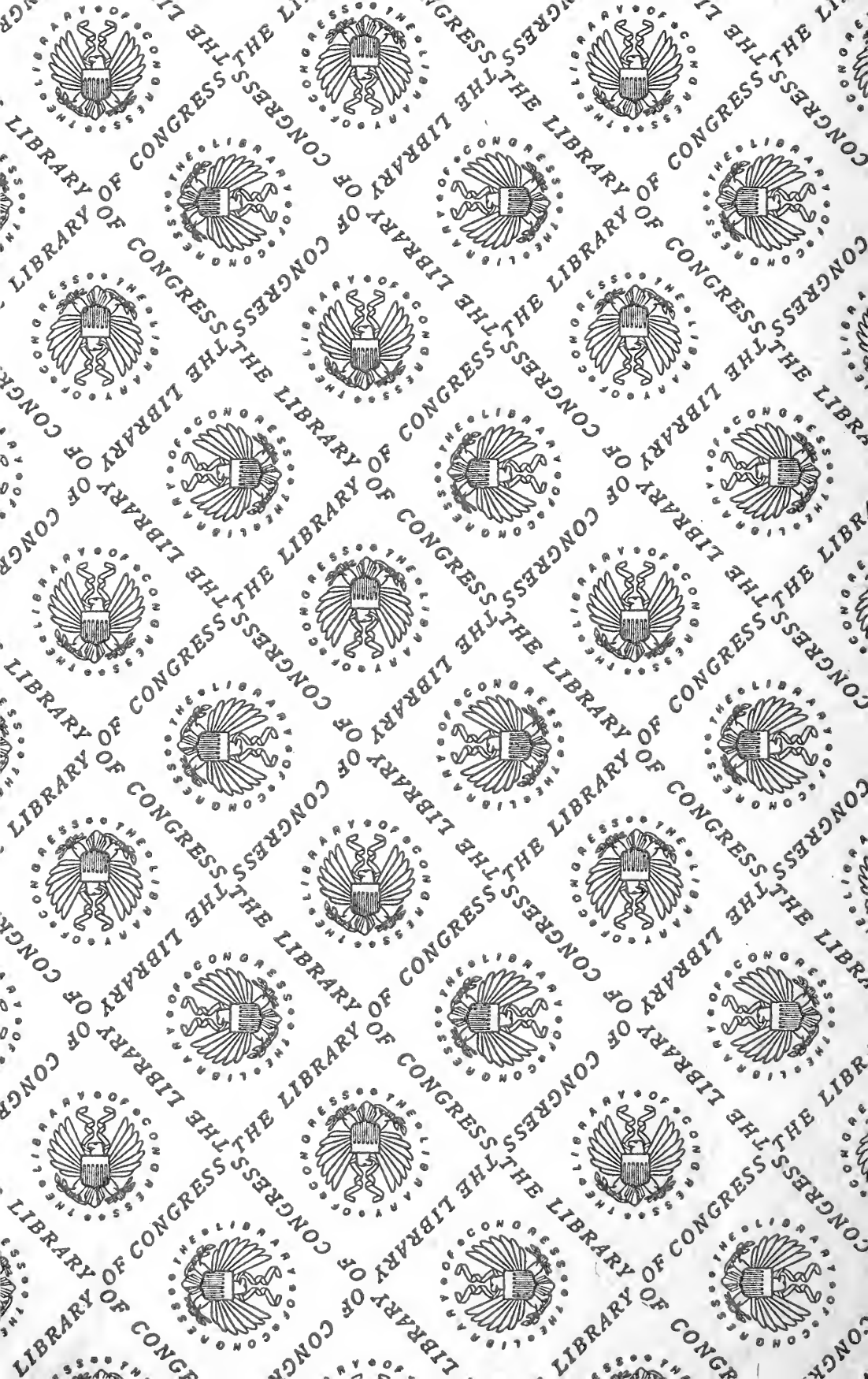
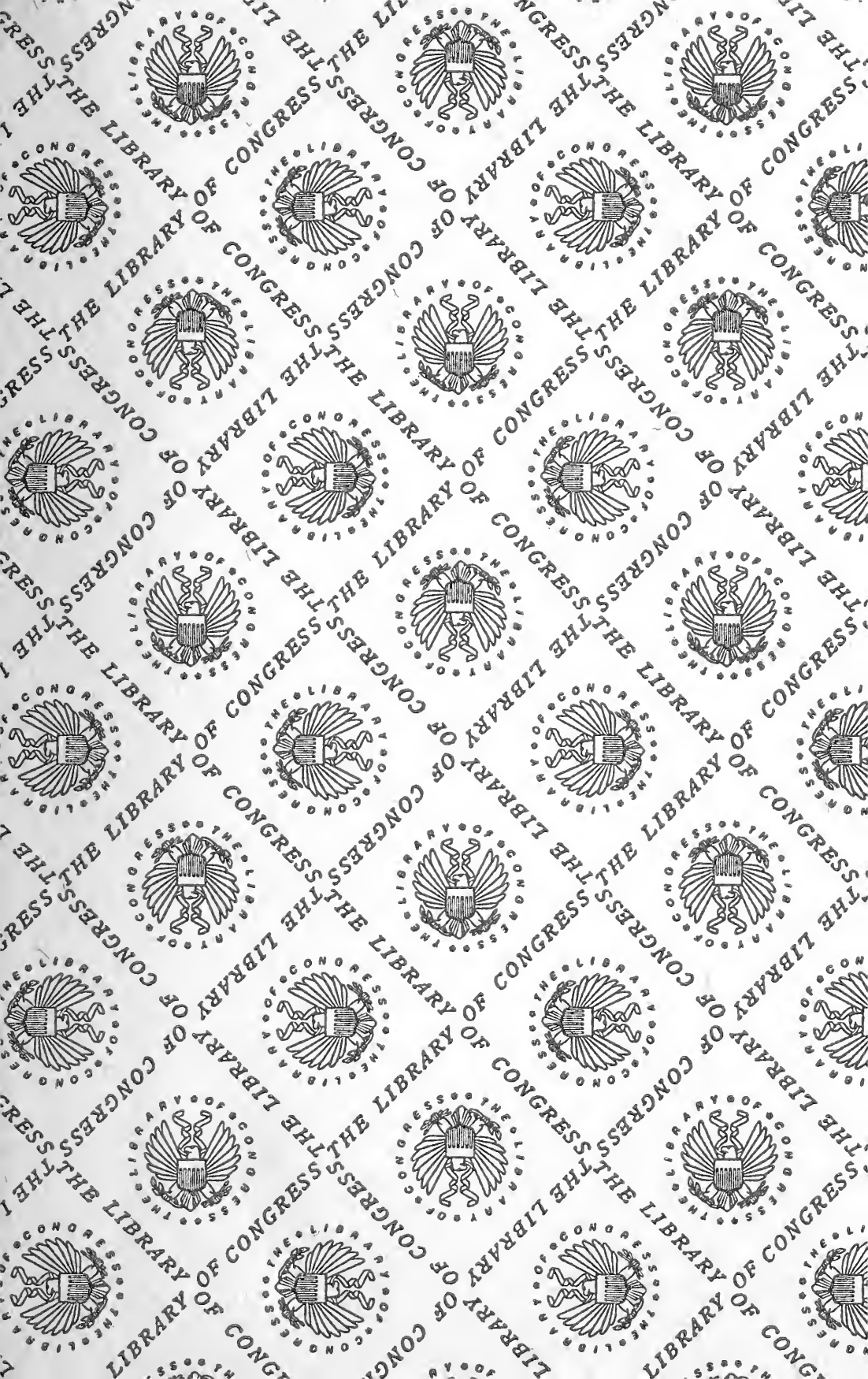


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1915







Thomas Irons

THE BLUE HEN'S
CHICKENS
—AND—
OTHER POEMS

BY
THOMAS IRONS



PHILADELPHIA
THE JOHN C. WINSTON COMPANY

1915

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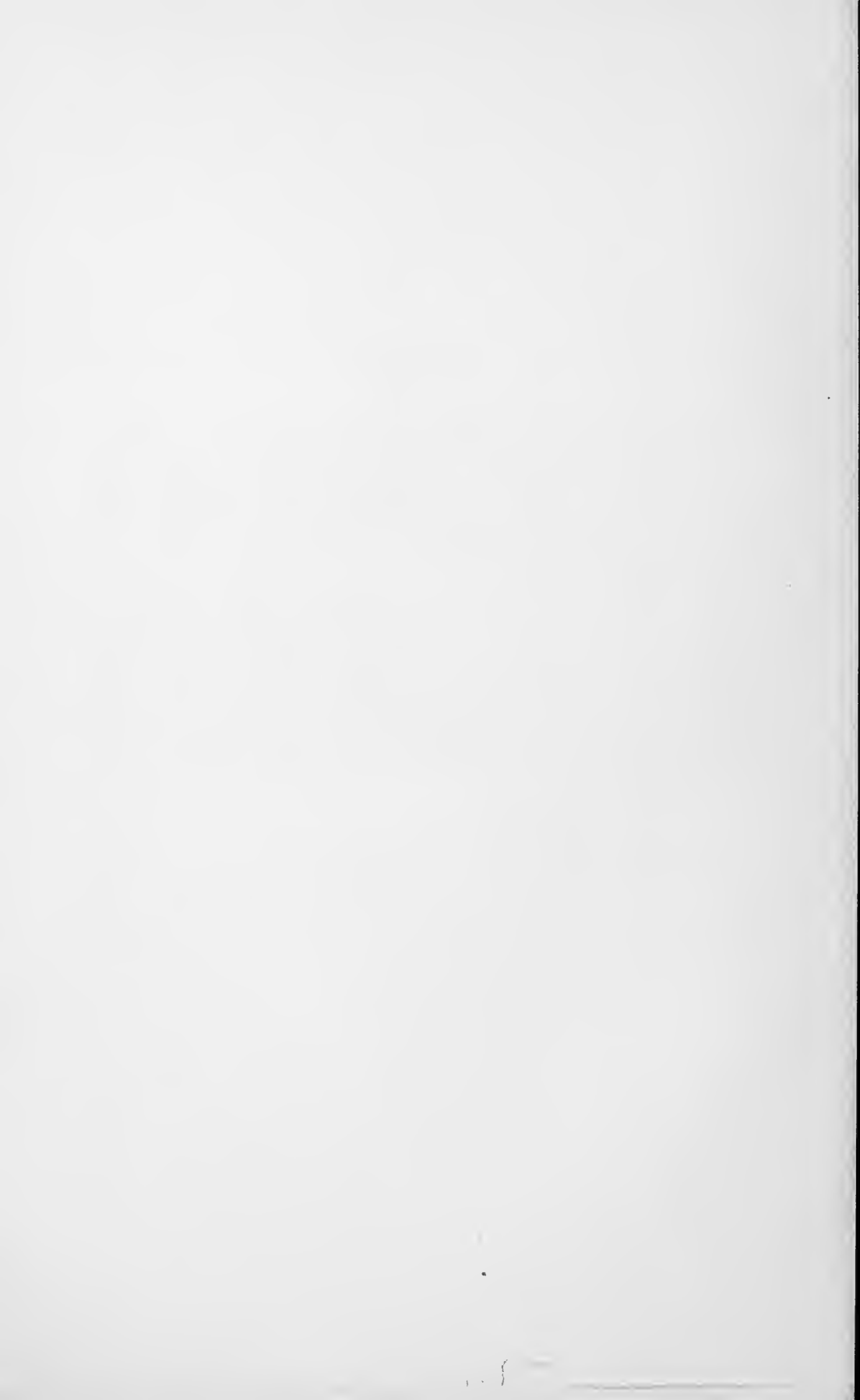
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To
THE MEMORY OF
MY MOTHER



PREFACE

THESE verses were written as an agreeable pastime. When I began writing them I had no thought they would grow into so many, or that I would make them into a book. They were all written after I was past the allotted time of three-score years and ten.

It is well for us if, in the leisure and weakness of age, we pleasantly engage our time and minds, lest indolence lead to discontent and discontent to melancholy. So in age I have pleasantly employed many leisure hours writing these verses. If any shall enjoy reading them I will be well recompensed, and I send them forth hoping they may give pleasure to some, even, it may be, after I am beyond recall.

T. I.

Camden, Del., July, 1915.

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PROLOGUE

*E'EN I may court the Muse, though she,
The charming nymph, is coy of me,
And maiden-like and shy;
But wooing her we truly find
She has a gen'rous heart and mind—
To win her bids us try.*

*And in the wooing of the Muse
She doth instruct, she may amuse;
Her pleasures seldom cloy.
'Tis many a pleasant hour I spend
That often helps my ways to mend,
And purer thoughts enjoy.*

*Companionship 'tis thus I find,
With cheer for heart and food for mind;
In these we're truly bless'd.
I cannot tell and none can show
Imagination's inward glow
That cannot be express'd.*

*She does not bring us wealth or fame,
Her gifts scarce meet the world's acclaim,
They're oft misunderstood;*

PROLOGUE

*But sweeter are, in her commune,
The joys she brings, a soul in tune
With feelings pure and good.*

*Sweet Muse, to catch thy strains I'll try,
Yet well I know from me thou'lt fly
If wrongs corrupt my mind.
A source of pleasure since we met,
In thee my sorrows oft forget;
In thee oft comfort find.*

*And 'tis beneath the sounding song,
My humble lay may steal along,
As hopefully I sing;
And singing, trust my lowly lay
May live when I am gone away,
Some cheer and help to bring.*

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

YOU'VE heard of th' chicks of th' old blue hen
And how they got their name and when.
Know they were bred in County Kent;
For 'tis beyond all argument
That Kent's the nest of th' old blue hen,
The home of Coldwell's fighting men.
They heroes proved in country's need,
For they were of true blue-hen breed;
In Delaware they lived content,
And free indeed in County Kent:
For fathers crossed the stormy sea,
That here their children might be free.
We know them English in descent
By names of Dover, Camden, Kent.

If fathers loved yet distant strand,
This was to them their native land:
A stalwart race of freemen they
In this good, old, colonial Day.
Their food from field and stream they drew
And no oppressor's hand they knew;
Nor mansion great nor lordly dome,
Was near to shame their humble home.

'Tis love of home makes heroes sure,
Makes love of country to endure;

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

And thus 'twas heroes heard the call
That Freedom sent, to freemen all,
From Lexington and Concord town;
Upon the winds it came adown;
From mountain side to ocean wide
It hastened Freedom's rising tide.

Then freemen came from Delaware,
In country's need a part to share.
And bravely then did each enroll
His name on Freedom's muster-roll,
And marched away to write a name
Upon the muster-roll of Fame.

How may I now of heroes tell,
When all alike seem to excel?
When all alike were free and brave
And each would die his land to save?
On glory's page, in order told,
Are their heroic names enroll'd;
And now, where'er their tombs are found,
Tread softly for 'tis sacred ground.
And sacred too those spots of earth
Where Valor gave a nation birth;
In Delaware, if such are found
With monument they should be crown'd.

We may think sacred too the Way
Rodney rode o'er in Freedom's day;

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

He onward rode, in purposed might
As if urged in some rapid flight.
And echo yet, so firm and fleet,
The hoof-beats of his horse's feet,
That time with Freedom's guns that hurl'd
The shots that echoed "round the world"—
Ride on! brave soul, through night forlorn,
Ride on! though weary, weak and worn,
Ride on! 'tis Freedom's brighter morn;
Ride on! to-day a Nation's born.

O could I pluck from blue hen's wing
A pen that I might worthy sing
And in heroic song might tell
How heroes fought—how heroes fell.
Their deeds are great, my words are weak,
And I some humbler theme must seek.
The deeds they did can never die,
But like the wind, our words pass by.

Yet will the deed invite the song,
For songs by right to deeds belong;
Oft in companionship are they,
For songs to deeds will find the way;
And songs the fame of deeds prolong,
But higher th' deed will lift the song.

So I'll attempt to further sing,
But careful keep a lower wing;

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Leave greater names for abler pen,
Sing only of the nameless men;
Or men whose names are only told
By muster-roll dim, stained, and old:
But patriotic men and brave,
Oft men who fullest measure gave;
At last a final *bivouac* found,
On Freedom's sacred burial-ground.

From northern oak to southern pine,
Best of the continental line
Were Delaware's brave soldier men;
True chicks indeed of th' old blue hen:
For fame of Kent's blue hen had grown
State wide, and men were glad to own
The *sobriquet*—in battle need
Proved too they were of blue-hen breed.

From home contested Brandywine,
On many battle fields we find,
Imbued with fire of "seventy-six,"
The true, brave men of th' blue hen's chicks.
They fought on hard embattled ground
Where foes of Freedom most were found.
They fought upon the northern hills,
Dyed with blood the southern rills.
They sometimes joined in victory,
Companions in defeat would be;
But, whether battle lost or gained

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Their hope and courage never waned.
Sadly they laid their dead away,
Prepared to fight some other day.

Can it be told, by tongue or pen,
The story sad of the brave men,
Five hundred strong, who marched away
From Delaware in flowery May?
And monument to-day is seen,
Upon the ancient Dover green,
That tells the year these noble men
Left homes they loved for country, when
They marched to southern battle field,
Where, finally, the foe did yield—
And after, marched they home, these men,
But scarce more than one hundred then;
Dead in our country's own South land
Lay most of this heroic band—
Dead on the field whence others fled,
Dead, where the rapid charge they led.

And Delaware's heroic men,
Fighting for home and home land then,
Oft wished for final victory
That they at home again could be.
In night's lone watch and weary round,
In thoughts of home oft comfort found.
When, after march or battle flame,
They to some dreary *bivouac* came,

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Thought o'er and o'er of fireside bright,
And of loved faces in its light;
And praying God loved ones to keep,
Oft cold and hungry, fell asleep:
And then again at home they seemed
But waked to find they only dreamed—
Dreamed of homes they loved to claim,
But to which many never came.

And in their humble homes were found,
War's greater cost and deeper wound.
How often wife felt sorest need,
And mother's heart for son would bleed
How often was there nameless dread,
As hearts imagined loved ones dead?
How often wished them home again,
How oft the wish gave deeper pain.
And children asked why father stayed
At mother's knee, for father prayed—
For father prayed, in trundle-bed—
Prayed, and knew not he was dead.

By cherished hope or promised plan,
Mother and child would highway scan,
Looking for father's safe return,
And distant figure would discern
And cry, he comes! he comes! but nigh,
Found 'twas some stranger passing by.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

O 'tis the saddest, saddest woe
That human brain and heart can know.
To look, and look, and look in vain,
For those who never come again—
O lives! that knew life's deeper want,
O souls! baptized at sorrow's font—
O man! 'tis woman bears war's cost
In husbands, sons and brothers lost.

On men like these and women too,
Are raised the monumental few;
And on their valor, in our land,
See eight and forty empires stand.

Empires that now united stand
In one heroic, union band;
For in the *sixties* too were men
Who were true chicks of th' old blue hen;
Whose names, as th' cycled years go round,
Will in a nation's love be found.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

IF I SUCH SONG COULD SING

AWAY to-day! for Spring is here,
She loitered long along the way;
Away to-day! The skies are clear,
I will be glad with Spring to-day.

And with glad Spring, I'd sing my song,
Sing in companionship of stream
And wood, and birds that wing along;
And waters in the sunlight gleam.

Sing, where the early flowers bloom
And where young leaves show deeper green;
Where nature now, for joy, makes room
And native beauty now is seen.

How small a thing a song may seem
Sung by some heart that joyed to sing;
May seem as passing as a dream,
As fleeting as a flower of spring.

How great may seem some granite pile,
Built to endure through nameless years,
That grandly stands, with seeming smile
Upon our petty, human fears.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

The generations come and go,
The granite pile leans to the dust,
Its purpose none can longer know,
Its history only fabulous.

But th' song lives on, as ages roll,
To cheer the heart of human kind;
It was born of a human soul
And thus abides in soul and mind.

If only I such song could sing,
Could find it in the soul to-day;
How true a joy to me 'twould bring—
How true a wealth to sing such lay.

How many souls have songs unsung?
And when for them some others sing,
Find kindred hearts and kindly tongue:
Yet deeper songs within them spring.

Find yet unsung some sweeter joy,
Unsung, some deeper loss or pain,
Some sweeter hope that they enjoy;
Some love that brings the highest gain.

The songs now sung in part we know,
Unsung, there must be many more;
Earth's singers yet some debt must owe,
The soul's deep longings to tell o'er.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Chance in the "after life," that we
To hope of which so fondly cling,
Our higher joy will constant be,
That there, redeemed, our songs we'll sing.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

MAY-TIME

'TIS the "merry month of May,"
Fields and woods are fresh and gay.
Odors sweet in morning air,
Blooming trees will fruitage bear.
Flowers bloom along the way,
Bright the sunshine all the day;
Or the rain comes raining down,
Over country, over town;
And the rainbow colors bright,
Ope the gates of coming night.

Brooks run with a merry sound,
Joy is everywhere around.
Roses budding now, will soon
Decorate their sister, June.
Grasses green, from humid ground:
All the earth hath Beauty found.

Young lambs, skipping, now at play,
Beasts have caught the breath of May:
Mating birds sing joyous lay,
Each to each the livelong day.
Nestlings in their nests are warm,
Mothers shelter from the storm;

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Soon the fledgelings fly away,
Flying back some other day.

Breezes come from winds asleep,
Pansies now begin to peep;
Beauty blooms around us now,
Glory drops from leaf and bough.
Days of splendor move along,
Please the eye and court my song.
Happy are the land and sea,
Nature hath her jubilee.

Let our hearts be joyous, gay,
As they were in childhood's day;
 When we saw the fields and stream,
 When we saw the waters gleam,
 When we saw the orchards teem,
 Saw the moonlight mildly beam;
 Saw all things as they might seem
 In a wondrous, happy dream:
Thinking thus 'twould ever be,
Joy for us in all we'd see.
Something's gone from earth and sky
Joyous to the youthful eye;
 Seems not as it seemed of yore—
 Joy grows less as years grow more;
 Joy is less, though deep the lore,
 Joy is less, though great the store.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Come again the happy day,
Come to us the joyous May;
Let us catch our youthful song,
As we ceaseless move along
To the Youth of endless day—
To the month that's ever May.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

ROBIN'S REDBREAST

I'VE heard it told, or somewhere read,
That Robin's redbreast is so red,
Because ('tis a story strange to tell)
It was burned red by fires of hell.

'Tis told he once took in his bill
Some drops of water from the rill
That ran through meads, in ripples bright;
Took them afar in weary flight.

And as he dropt the waters in
To cool the lips, condemned for sin,
The fires flamed up until his crest,
And burned red wee Robin's breast.

And 'tis, I fancy, since that day,
His "chirp, chirp, chir, tra la,"
A song to plead with those who sin,
That they go not where he has been.

So, some day, when you hear him sing
This story to your mind 't'll bring,
And you may feel a care for him,
With his tra la, unwritten hymn.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

And when you see his breast so red,
Remember this, that you have read
That it was burned by fires of hell
In mercy's cause, as here I tell.

The fable's yours, doubt it you may,
Yet, mercy's impulse to obey,
Would you not do as Robin did,
Though prudence should the act forbid?

To them you'd carry if you could,
Once of our common brotherhood,
Great cooling draughts, if not betwixt
Yourself and them a "gulf" is fixed.

Yet, in this life we thoughtless live,
Nor help, nor counsel care to give,
But oft, for gain or base desire,
Some soul may lead to fate most dire.

So if you would lead some to sin,
In this old world we now are in,
Or would yourself to sin be led,
Remember Robin's redbreast, red.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

LOOKING

YON silver moon that looks for me again,
How oft must she, in brightness, "wax and wane,"
Ere, rising o'er the hills and fertile plain,
She comes to look, and looks for me in vain?

Those loving eyes that press the window pane,
And look, and loving, look for me again;
And brighter grow whene'er, in sun or rain,
I come, will e'er they look for me in vain?

Those souls that loved me, counseled for my gain,
Now from me far, and far from human pain,
Must they, yet loving me, e'er look in vain
My coming home, to be with them again?

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

APRIL

LIKE maiden shy, with slower pace,
Essaying unaccustomed place;
So April comes, with timid feet,
The season's frailest flowers to greet.

Inconstant, stormy March is past,
With clouds, and winds, and wintry blast;
Freed from his chilling sleet and snow,
Frail April flowers begin to blow:
Found in some warm or crannied place,
They show their white or pinkish face.
Unfolding leaves show misty green,
And skyward, deep'ning blue is seen.
The emerald grass begins to grow,
And golden daffodils to show;
The yellow buttercups unfold,
And spring-time, golden marigold.

Comes soft the hum of insect life,
In early, busy swarms they're rife.
The spring birds wing their way along,
And bring the harmony of song.
The bees begin their eager toil,
The sweetest flowers to despoil;

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

With scarcely heard, low murmured sound,
From flower to flower, the sweets are found.

The brimming water courses flow,
As April clouds their rains bestow.
Her gentle showers onward sweep,
As if for madcap March she'd weep;
As weeps the maid when in love cross'd,
And she her lover's love has lost;
As mother weeps for baby dead—
She softly weeps by cradle bed.

Through April's changing clouds and wind,
'Tis said she has a fickle mind;
No June-time beauty can she boast,
Yet she's a welcome month to most.
She's borrowed storms of March, they say,
But oft she peers her sister, May.
Not changeful moods to which she clings,
It is the promise that she brings
Of brighter days and calmer skies,
That we so much her coming prize:
She brings the season's early cheer,
And oft proclaims that Spring is here.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

WHEN STORMS ARE PAST

THE haven's safe when storms are past,
The ship at anchor riding;
So heav'n must be when at the last,
We're in its port abiding.

Sweet is the rest when toils are done,
Sweet rest is found in sleeping;
So sweet's the rest for us He's won,
When we sleep in His keeping.

Dear is the ease, when war no more
Doth vex and mar the resting;
So dear's the ease, earth's warfare o'er,
No more alarms molesting.

Thus after storms, and toils, and war,
On earth we're often meeting,
We'll find in heav'n they cannot mar
Our rest and peace, unfleeting.

And when storms come, and loss, and fear,
And sorrows make days dreary,
We'll not forget the Healer's near;
A Balm for hearts a-weary.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

And find, as toiling on the way,
A hope for rest abiding;
Find, bearing burdens day by day,
The Burden Bearer's guiding.

And when earth's storms and toils are past,
Earth's failings all revealing,
We'll find repose in heav'n at last;
And in His wings find healing.

On earth, how oft, as go the years,
We count our good but sorrow;
How often shed the useless tears,
For useless pains we borrow.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

A REAL CROESUS

This is founded on an event of my boyhood. I very well remember that there were just seventeen pennies.

I REMEMBER the day,
In the time long away,
And the seventeen pennies so old;
There were eight, there were nine,
And they surely were mine;
And I counted them over as gold.

I was rich in that day,
I was happy and gay;
I was glad, with the gladness of youth.
Could I choose all the gold
Or the pennies so old,
I would choose the old pennies, forsooth,

If with them there'd be,
My youth given to me;
With all youth, in its richness, doth hold.
I am lonesome to-day
For the loved ones away,
And my thousands grow useless—I'm old.

'Twas some visitor came,
I've forgotten his name,

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Who increased my pennies in store;
It was Sunday I know,
We remember things so
That were ours in the days long afore.

With bare feet I made tracks
To the fodder in stacks,
Thus away, with my pennies, to hide;
And I laid them around
In a space on the ground,
And laughed o'er them, in my pride.

And I placed them in rows,
And in circles for shows;
And I counted them many times o'er:
If all gold was for me,
So a Croesus I'd be,
Such a Croesus I'd never be more.

And I thought, in my glee,
How my mother would see
All my wealth, and be glad of her boy.
That on me she would smile
And caress me the while,
In her gladness because of my joy.

But old age, with its loss,
When my gains seem as dross,

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

And my youth, with my pennies, is gone,
Has now come to me sure,
I was rich, now I'm poor,
And grow poorer as still I go on.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

THE MORNING COMETH

THE light rims on the eastern way,
The cheerful harbinger of day;
The cocks are early crowing.
The stars are fading, one by one,
The dark and lonesome night is done;
The early daylight's showing.

Awake! awake! 'tis early morn,
Another happy day is born,
The feathered warblers wooing.
The day is coming—darkness gone,
We have another glorious dawn;
Our love of life renewing.

All nature gladdens with the morn,
A deeper gladness in us born;
The world with light's o'erflowing.
The lambs, in gladness, skip and play,
The birds sing out a roundelay,
The flowers faster growing.

The horse neighs out his glad surprise,
The watch dog hears the distant cries
From fields with light aglowing.
The happy, wingéd creatures pass,

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

The dew-drops pendent on the grass;
The rippling streams are flowing.

The orchard, early with its bloom,
Gives to the morn its rich perfume;
Its richer fruits foretelling.
The children glad and maidens fair,
Awake to breathe the morning air;
The morning chorus swelling.

The early bees, with murmuring sound,
Are with the early flowers found;
Their honeyed sweets extracting.
The morning breezes are at play,
With quivering leaves and flowers gay;
The insect life attracting.

'Tis as a world born of the night,
Now shows its glories in the light;
Like Beauty waked from dreaming.
O earthly good! O heav'nly bliss!
Where may we find more good than this?
Or more of heav'nly seeming?

O lights! O sounds! O scenes around!
Where may a truer joy be found?
We see a world awaking.
And in this earthly morn we know,
(O glad we are it will be so,
The soul new joy partaking;)

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

That when all earthly morns are fled,
And all of earthly beauty's dead,
 A promised Morn is breaking.
All mornings will in it combine,
And all their glories in it shine;
 The dead to life awaking.

A newer gladness comes as we,
By faith that promised Morning see,
 A faith that's firmer growing,
That such glad Morn for us will rise,
And paint its glories in the skies;
 Unending joy bestowing.

That Morn will ope the gates of gold,
All heav'nly glories will unfold;
 All glory else excelling.
Then shall we see the Lowly Born,
And share a gladder natal Morn;
 Our love for Him impelling.

And when that glor'ous Morn's array'd,
For which all other morns were made,
 'T'll set our hearts aglowing;
For on that Morning we shall greet
The lost of earth, communion sweet,
 With joy all hearts o'erflowing.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

CALLING ME

MY boyhood home once on the hill,
Just o'er the mill-dam, from the mill
Where father tended the grinding grain—
Of his good flour a little vain—
And waters, streams, and wood, and shade.
All seeming just for boyhood made.

Below the dam, tides rose and fell
And lilies bloomed in watery dell.
Just where the tail-race then began,
The rippling waters rapid ran,
And farther on did slowly flow,
Where cat-tail flags did rankly grow;
And farther yet the wid'ning stream,
Was shown by mists in morning's gleam;
While pond above, in glimm'ring light,
Soon glittered in the sunshine bright.

And when the morning winds were still,
The waters mirrored home, and hill,
And trees, and vines, and all that grew,
And everything that shadow threw.
Above, the morning's own blue sky,

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Below, another charmed the eye;
A world above, a world below,
How boyish fancy made it so:
He wondered, looking far adown,
And smiled at world turned upside down.

Ah! may we not, in endless youth,
Look down some mirrored way, forsooth,
And smile, and wonder more, as we
Our topsy-turvy world may see?

In blooming time, the gentle breeze
Bore fragrance from magnolia trees.
Here, coming spring-time seemed to find
A place well suited to her mind;
And scatt'ring beauty o'er the land,
She dropt it here with lavish hand.

The dripping water wheel all day,
Turned slowly, in its lazy way.
Inside the mill, the wheels ran round,
And round, and round, with merry sound;
And in our home the sounds we'd hear,
As they came softened to the ear.
Mother in doorway calling me,
I calling back to her in glee,
As, laughing, I'd run down the hill,
In boyish ways, with boyish will.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

To-day, again, I've seen it all,
Save now there is no mother's call,
And silence where the wheels went round,
They are no more, nor merry sound;
And silence where our home once stood,
And silence broods o'er stream and wood.
Alone, I wished that it could be,
Again my mother calling me—
How soon my wish must answered be,
As, moved, I prayed most earnestly,
That to the right I might be true,
The good and noble to pursue;
And prayed from sinning to be free—
Was not my mother calling me?

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

SUCCESS

SUCCESS we've had if we have done
Our work, and doing, made lives brighter;
If we some good have nobly won,
And winning, made some hearts the lighter.

If we have always praised the good,
Our friends or fellows have been doing;
If we've helped others, when we could,
To do their best, their best thus wooing.

If we have tried to live in deeds,
To make our lives more worth the living;
Have given help to human needs
That can't repay—'twas noblest giving.

If we have laughed and have loved much,
And find these banish care and grieving,
And lengthen days, so we may touch
Some cherished goal, some good achieving.

And if to gain the highest good,
Our lives have been above deceiving;
Have found the truest brotherhood
By being true, when trust receiving.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

In others, if we've found their best,
And always of our best been giving.
If only good has been our quest,
Then surely we've had noble living.

And know the tasks we've tried to do,
So often failing in the trying,
That if we tried the tasks anew,
With true success we then were vying.

Learned if we failed and tried again,
Life's hardest knot we were untying;
That seldom did we try in vain,
For all success is found in trying.

Know if we miss the end we seek,
And, seeming, all is loss and grieving,
Some others see where we are weak,
Through us, success may be achieving.

Found when we do our very best,
Whate'er we find to be resulting,
We're gaining strength for higher quest;
In nobler purpose are exulting.

And know that we'll not live in vain,
If some small good we may be doing;
That even there's eternal gain,
If we some souls from sin are wooing.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

If we have learned our Brother's care,
And given care to brothers needing;
If, of our good, want's had a share,
In lasting good we are succeeding.

Know if we miss our highest good,
We shall not fail, though small the showing,
If we have done the best we could;
Our Father all our weakness knowing.

And when from doing we are free,
And are at rest, in silence lying,
Could friends praise more than tell that we,
To do our best were always trying?

THE OLD WOOD FIRE

I THINK to-night of th' old wood fire,
Burning high and burning higher;
Of loved and lost who come between,
And of the days that I have seen,
Since I sat by the old wood fire,
Burning high and burning higher.

No more have we the cheering blaze
Nor chimney wide of former days;
The modern heaters freeze the soul,
We shake and shiver o'er the coal;
And oft wish for the old wood fire,
Burning high and burning higher.

I often watched the glowing embers,
And now my glowing heart remembers
Who sat with me on wintry days,
And watched with me the cheerful blaze;
And loved me by the old wood fire,
Burning high and burning higher.

There were my father and my mother
At times my sisters and my brother;
And when there was no vacant chair
A sweeter store of comforts share,

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

As we'd sit by the old wood fire,
Burning high and burning higher.

When cold and stormy winds without
Blew hard and drove the snow about,
Then we drew closer to the blaze,
And hearts drew closer in the days,
When we sat by the old wood fire,
Burning high and burning higher.

If falling snow, or sleet, or rain;
If cold did frost the window pane,
Or rushing blasts blew at our door,
These made us love each other more;
As we sat by the old wood fire,
Burning high and burning higher.

The big, back log at Christmas time,
When higher yet the blaze did climb,
And brighter shone the fireside light
On faces brighter with delight;
And merry we by th' old wood fire,
Burning high and burning higher.

The Johnny-cake,* by mother made,
To bake before the fire was laid;

* The name of an Indian corn-bread baked before the open wood fire, on wooden boards; formerly a common usage with the poorer people of rural Delaware.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

The richest food that wealth can buy,
Within my heart, can never vie
With cake baked by the old wood fire,
Burning high and burning higher.

A thousand fancies oft I found,
A thousand castles built around
The dying coals or rising flame;
Built for myself a fancied fame,
As oft I watched the old wood fire,
Burning high and burning higher.

The mem'ries of the old brick hearth,
Of faces bright, with genial mirth,
Cheer me to-night, though long the day,
And cheerless oft the traveled way
Between me and the old wood fire,
Burning high and burning higher.

The worldly wealth that I possess,
And many things I've called success,
I'd give to be a child to-night,
Of vanished faces have the sight,
And sit again by th' old wood fire,
Burning high and burning higher.

TIME AND BEAUTY

O TIME, thou sure iconoclast,
No imaged beauties with thee last;
Renewéd oft, as oft thou'lt hide,
In dust, all beauty and all pride.

The flowers bloom along the way,
But blooming, bloom but for a day;
And beauty blooms on maiden cheek,
The bloom soon dies—the flesh is weak:
How soon is lost the splendid grace
That blooms in human form and face.

The painter fain would beauty stay,
By pictured forms, to future day;
But, busy Time the trick decries
And often mars the valued prize.

Of beauty, oft the poet sings,
And oft to it more beauty brings,
His flowing numbers move along,
Give grace and beauty to his song;
Though high his harmonies may swell,
His higher thoughts yet higher dwell.
He loves the beauty of his lays,

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

And fain would sing to future days;
But soon he meets the common lot,
Poems and poet both forgot:
Thus beauty dies with poet's lay,
And dying thus, it dies for aye.

The shining beauty of the spheres
May pass, as pass the nameless years.
To nothingness must all things go,
Decay and death have ordered so,
And endless void may sometime be,
Where worlds of beauty now we see.
'Tis no material beauties last
In all creation near or vast.
The golden wealth we strive to gain,
With toil, by wrongs, with slavish pain,
We find no lasting joy it brings,
Or, beauty like, it may take wings.

Yet we rejoice, the thought inspires
And meets the soul's intense desires,
That there are beauties that will last,
When all of earthly beauty's past.
The beauty Time can not control,
Must bloom within the human soul;
As faith and love, for these abide,
Whatever to the world betide.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

HER LOVER

YE wanton birds that gaily sing
In brightest June-time weather,
Fly to my love, with swiftest wing,
Nor stop to preen a feather.

Away! fly o'er the garden walls,
She in her bower reposes;
Her loveliness my heart enthralls,
As she lies fenced with roses.

Fly quick, my message take I say,
Love's errand must impel you—
Fly soft; for, on this bright June day,
Of sweetest love I tell you.

Go take my love to her to-day,
And sing love's songs above her;
To her sweet bower find the way,
There purity discover.

And sing my love, my love sing low,
For love doth banish sorrow,
Ye little birds, go tell her so
And give her sweet good morrow.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

And angels come to be with her
As she doth sweetly slumber;
Her innocence no guilts incur,
Her graces none can number.

And fairer is she when she sleeps,
And fairy hands caress her,
Her guardian Angel ever keeps,
And happy dreams do bless her.

Go warble sweetest songs I say,
With angels 'round her hover,
That in her sweetest dreams to-day,
She'll dream of me, her lover.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

ALL IS PRICELESS

AS I did worldly good pursue,
With worldly good I restless grew;
A void within—a secret dread
Oft shadowed o'er the life I led.

My restless soul oft sought for rest,
To earthly good alone the quest;
Forgot immortal part of mine
Could only rest in the Divine.

The shadows deepened over me,
My life from bondage would be free;
To find the Best my heart was sore,
And seeking, I came to His door.

He welcomed me, bid me come in,
And girding, washed my soul from sin,
And breaking, bid me eat life's bread;
A boundless store where souls are fed.

Yet oft I wander from His door,
The world holds up a tempting store,
But all its glories false lights shed;
Thus oft by sin we are misled.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

But when I seek again to find
Peace for a troubled heart and mind,
He seems to welcome me the more;
I think because I've come before.

When burdens I alone would bear,
And my own weakness try to share,
How oft He sees and calls to me,
Brother, I'll bear thy load with thee.

When in His promised land of rest,
Redeemed, with the redeemed, I'm bless'd,
'Tis then from sin I will be free—
The bitter cup He drained for me.

And all is priceless, save we may,
'Tis all the price that we can pay,
Will we do less, can we do more,
Than point some wander'r to His door?

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

THE HUMAN, THE DIVINE

THE HUMAN

HOW soon I must rest, if rest may be found
Down in the dark grave, deep under the ground.
If rest it may be forever to die,
Forever with king of terrors to lie.
No more the glad morn, no daylight to break,
No chanticler's call from slumber to wake.
No star to arise, no glimmer of light,
No hope for the dawn: eternally night.
No musical stream, no gleaming, glad wave,
Nor fruitage, nor flower to gladden the grave.
No beauty for me, no song bird to cheer,
No loved one to smile, or ever come near.
To leave the bright world and all I may see,
With beauty and song, so gracious to me.
For me, no blue sky is bending above,
Or mirrored below in waters I love.
And never to know, nor ever to dream;
The darkness of death forever supreme.
Ay, must I leave all I love in the world,
From life to despair and darkness be hurl'd?
No one to know me, no one to caress—
O horrors! I hate such horrid duress.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Alone I must be, imprisoned, forgot,
Companioned by worms and slowly to rot.

THE DIVINE

He laid in the grave, the Saviour divine,
He rose from the grave, the Saviour of mine.
Then why should I fear to enter the tomb?
My Saviour for me has lightened its gloom.
The great man of Uz, in years long ago,
Knew, though worms consume, in flesh he'd live on.
And Christ has told us, 'tis Heaven's own lore,
That they in the grave—why marvel ye more—
Shall hear and come forth, at sound of His voice,
In gladness of life to know and rejoice.
Beyond all the joys of stream and of wave,
Of fruitage and flower this side of the grave;
Beyond all the beauty earthly to see,
All glory and gladness earthly for me;
Beyond all the joys of love that I know,
Beyond all of hoped-for goodness below,
Are highest of joys beyond the dark grave;
For Jesus laid there that Heaven might save.
The mansions are many, Jesus said so,
And joyous life more than human can know.
So banish all dread, all fear of despair,
For endless the Life forever found there:
Where, spreading glad wings, we tower away,
To join in the joys of ever glad Day.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

WINTER

HOW shall I now attempt to sing?
What music can the singer bring?
The pleasing things that verse invite,
In wintry frosts are hid from sight,
These dreary days.

From out the north the driving snow,
The bare limbs bending to and fro,
Or bending down with snow or sleet,
As if 'twere nature's winding-sheet,
These chilling days.

The singing birds have taken wing,
The frozen streams forget to sing:
If Mercy has not housed them warm,
The shiv'ring beasts bend to the storm,
These colder days.

In icy blasts the north winds blow,
The flowers all are hid below
The grasses dying. Summer joys
Are only mem'ry's broken toys,
These winter days.

The sun swings low and short the day,
And nights hold long and lonesome way;
But in the dark and wintry storm,
'Tis cherished love the heart keeps warm,
 These fireside days.

E'en hearts bereaved and left to mourn,
Find kinship in the scenes forlorn;
And winter's stormy blasts seem kind,
To blighted heart or troubled mind,
 These passing days.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

IF I WERE DEAD TO-DAY

IF I were dead to-day,
The sun would go his daily round,
The moon her nightly way;
And Beauty clothe the blooming ground,
And flowers gay she'd bring,
And birds would blithely sing;
And nature all her glories spread,
She unaware that I was dead.

If I were dead to-day,
The stars would rise and mornings shine,
And children wake to play;
And nights grow calm and days grow fine,
The season's plenty flow,
And hearts would gladness know;
But I should not awake to see
That all these gracious things would be.

If I were dead to-day,
Friends might look on my quiet face,
And kindly words might say;
On it some lines of goodness trace:
And flowers might lay on
My bier, now I am gone;

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

And look on my cold form and woo
To mind some good I tried to do.

If I were dead to-day,
Some one estranged, to me might turn
In true forgiving way,
And friendship to their hearts return:
Moist eyes might look on me,
My wrongs forgotten be,
And all my good remembered now,
As hands were laid on my cold brow.

If I were dead to-day,
Some might recall things I have borne
That heavy made my way.
For sometimes I've been made to mourn,
Had causes to be sad—
But more to make me glad:
How often loved ones with us share
The burdens we are called to bear.

If I were dead to-day,
Some might remember I did trust
His love along life's way,
That He is good and He is just,
And in the great unknown,
His children He will own:
That He loves us and everything,
So flowers bloom and birds do sing.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

CHRISTMAS MUSINGS

SWEET are the thoughts of days long past,
Of voices heard on earth no more,
They'll cheer us on while mind doth last;
They're of our sweetest earthly store.

We think of loved ones we have lost,
Their gifts we keep until this hour;
Some little gifts, though small their cost,
To us to-day how rich a dower.

We love the merry Christmas day,
The cycle of the seasons brings,
When 'tis, by some small gifts, we may
Show too our love by little things.

As we look o'er life's checkered way,
We feel 'tis much to God we owe;
His loving care, on Christmas day,
We inward feel and truly know.

O wondrous mercy of our God,
We know, in love, He guides our way;
Each sin has its correcting rod,
Each grief gives joy a brighter ray.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

The harder schoolings we have had,
Have onward wrought to nobler end
Each erring folly, howe'er sad,
Has brought some effort to amend.

And too, to-day, we muse on One,
In manger bed on Christmas day:
A Little Child our love has won,
He's stranded on our hearts for aye.

We love Him and His lowly way;
Not as some conqueror came He,
To whom allegiance we must pay;
Nor yet some wondrous mystery.

But e'en a little child He came,
Asking our love, 'tis all His plea;
Innocent, yet a Saving Name,
He bore our sins upon the "tree."

As infants "crying in the night,"
We cry to One who knows our cry;
To answer us woke Heaven's might—
To answer, He alone must die.

Thus as the Christmas days are seen,
And with their cheer and good depart,
Like time's own perfum'd flow'rs between,
They leave love's perfume in the heart.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

"OLD JOE"

One Joseph Todd died in the Kent County Almshouse in July, 1907. He was of good parentage and once had good prospects, but, falling a victim to the drink habit, he was for many years a common drunkard; known in Camden, Delaware, and vicinity as Old Joe.

HE'S gone beyond recall, "Old Joe";
To him death came, the debt we owe
He's paid; and now he sleeps the peer
Of all who sleep. None did revere
Or give him love; all passed him by
As one undone; and yet the cry
Of our hearts is, as was his own,
A poor, dependent cry. 'Tis known
That no life is divorced from good,
Or from its kind, and ever would
To other lives draw near. We call
To mind his mother, who, withal,
Held dearest her dear baby child,
And oft, in musings, much beguil'd
The hours in picturing a true man:
Unmindful of the "cup" that can
Destroy the fairest hopes. The soul
Oft looks to Love as its true goal;
Turns from the law that would shut out
"Old Joe" from heaven, and, without

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Hope, ever would leave him in deep,
Eternal night. And none could keep
The law: and came to earth the One
Who, for all erring souls, has won
The hope that cheers the saddest heart:
In which the weariest life has part.

As lily, growing from the slime,
Is beautiful, so grows sublime
This hope from loss of ruined life;
The hope that gleams amid the strife
Of earth and brightens o'er the hour
Of death; to parting soul a tower
Of refuge—hope of heav'n. One saw,
In fancy saw, two friends withdraw,
As once it chanced, he did divine,
"With Roland and Sir Leoline."
Each speaking "words of high disdain"
"They parted, ne'er to meet again;"
But marks of love will long remain,
Through weary years, the heart to pain.

Like cliff that has been rent apart,
(Sometimes is rent the human heart),
And sullen stream should flow between;
Yet, as he told, no storms we've seen,
Nor rains, nor frost, can full efface
The marks on parted cliff; but trace
Of union long remain. So hearts

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

That have united been, no arts
Or evil tongue can e'er efface
The marks of union, or erase
A mother's love or love of child;
Who, though misguided and revil'd,
Are by love for each other bless'd:
Love must live in the land of rest,
And there burn with a purer flame;
Where mother shall her son reclaim,
And find surcease of long felt pain,
And press him to her heart again.

'Tis so, or else in vain she prays,
For, through the long and weary days,
She prays return of wayward boy—
Seems vainly prays, and the alloy
Of doubt comes in, she unaware
That Father has, to answer prayer,
Eternal years. O praying soul,
Why doubt? Forget not that the goal
Of Christian hope oft lies beyond
This weary life. Then ne'er despond,
But know that all your pray'rs are in
Your Father's keeping, and, within
His own good time, will answered be
In peace and joy beyond degree.

But peace and joy seem incomplete
If 'tis in heav'n we ne'er may meet

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

The loved of earth, or mother know
Her sinning boy, on him bestow
Her love; or child on mother lean,
Forgetting years that intervene
Since parting hour. We this do know,
That love and mercy from Him flow
To sinful souls, and must there be
To this deep stream, so full, so free,
A boundary set? O we of faith
So small! 'Tis sure some gloomy wraith
Of some old, dying past that would
Limit to th' few, the chosen good,
A heav'n. The lost He came to seek—
The lost, the fallen wander'r weak:
These in His love He doth enfold,
And when, in heav'n, Love's story's told
And th' lost are found, then we may know
A heav'n He's found for lost "Old Joe."

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

TRINITY

HOLY, blessèd, glor'ous,
Over all victor'ous;
Mighty One in Three,
Draw us to love Thee
Make us truly free;
Blessèd Trinity.

Thou for us wast bruised
For our sins accused.
Love to us reveal,
Pard'ning love to feel;
Warm our hearts with zeal,
Blessèd Trinity.

Sorrow's cup was pressed
To Thy lips, the Blessed;
Ours the lasting gain,
Blotting out sin's stain;
Thou for us wast slain,
Blessèd Trinity.

All our burdens knowing
All Thy love bestowing
On us earthly born:

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Bearing rudest scorn,
Giving gladdest morn
Blessèd Trinity.

Earthly life is fleeting,
Soon for us there's greeting
On the farther shore;
There to love thee more,
For the wounds Thou bore,
Blessèd Trinity.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

THE MUSE

HOW oft poetic Muse doth try
To Pegasus mount, in fancy fly
O'er fens and fields afar:
To heaven he will none convey,
But to the Muse he points the way;
A constellation star.

And looking up, the Muse doth sing,
From out Mount Helicon doth spring
Her flowing stream along,
To lave the heart of human need,
To bathe the human wounds that bleed,
In music's rippling song.

'Tis much the Muse religion owes,
And too 'tis much the Muse bestows;
She doth her powers task,
To build in rhyme her glowing songs,
To aid religion, fighting wrongs:
Oft sword and battle casque.

And when in victory out rings
The fervent songs religion sings,
'Tis much she owes the Muse

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

For hymns of joyous love and praise,
For melting, sweet, melodious lays,
That oft the soul suffuse.

The minister and minstrel join
In ancient root and, in the coigne
Of vantage, stand or fall
Together. In the altar smoke
The Muse was found, and early spoke
Her lays at worship's call.

The sweet songs sung by Israel's king,
To hearts the sweetest comforts bring
And fill the soul with song.
His muse all worship doth enrich
With psalms, the prayer and praise of which,
To sore-tried lives belong.

Of love the Muse delights to sing,
And singing, mounts on higher wing,
And trills her sweeter songs.
Ere loving Sappho's ancient days,
To loving hearts she tuned her lays;
For love to hearts belongs.

But while of love she loves to sing,
Of war and bloodshed too can bring
To us the horrid tale.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Of country oft, in stirring rhymes,
She rouses us to mend the times,
And cruel wrongs assail.

She loves to sing of home and friends;
To friendship's joys she often lends
Her richly chiming phrase.
With love of home hearts overflow,
For childhood homes how truly so;
For these her sweeter lays.

More joyous yet she spreads her wings
Of love, and lovingly she sings
Of Him who stills our fears.
With love divine the heart oft burns,
And oft, in sorrows, to Him turns
With eyes suffused with tears.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

PASSING ON

THERE are expectations past,
There are hopes that fail anon,
There are joys that will not last,
These are failing, passing on;
Marring sweetness
By their fleetness,
These are failing, passing on.

There are sorrows that grow light,
With our joys they pass anon,
There are shadows that grow bright,
These are failing, passing on;
Thus our sadness
With our gladness,
Both are failing, passing on.

There'll be sadness in the day,
Gladness too will come anon,
When all we have passed away,
We are failing, passing on;
With our sorrows
And glad morrows,
We are failing, passing on.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Will we know of hopes and fears
In the life we'll look upon?
Will we then be past all cares?
Will we still be passing on?
When we're sleeping
In death's keeping—
Will the soul be passing on?

But as now we onward grope,
Knowing of the end anon,
Faith gives us the surest hope,
That we cherish, passing on;
That we nourish,
And we cherish,
That we cherish, passing on.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

LET ME RIDE AND FATHER DRIVE

O RUTHLESS Time, I call to thee,
Where hast thou hid my youth from me?
Bring back the youthful things of mine,
They never truly can be thine;
They all to Youth by right belong,
So bring my youth and them along.

Bring childhood faces long away,
Companions of my youthful day.
And hearts will hold some trifles dear,
So bring remembered chanticleer.
And don't forget my little dog,
Nor my school mates nor pedagogue,
My gen'rous mates, my master, kind,
Who oft to boyish tricks was blind;
Maybe o'erlooked some broken rule
For me, the poorest boy in school.

My dog and I oft played in glee,
And oft my sole companion, he;
But came a time when we must part;
I wonder did he know my heart
As I knew his? A last caress,
And boyish hours of play grew less.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Bring back, be sure, our old, lame mare,
The cart she drew, 'twas worse by wear,
And let me ride, you can contrive,
Aye, let me ride and father drive.
No equipage, for kings to see,
Could ever give such joys to me;
The joys in mem'ry yet abide,
When father drove and I did ride
In our old cart rough, rude, and rent,
Drawn by our mare that lamely went.

Bring back the cherry by the road,
Bring back our humble home, abode;
No mansions fair, as fair can be,
Could e'er be half so dear to me;
And in my heart doth dearer grow,
As parting years do onward go.
And gladder was the time for me,
When brother, mother came to see;
But far he went, passed out our door,
And never did we see him more.
Then mother something sadder grew,
E'en I some less of gladness knew:
Once mother asked, with eyes tear-dim,
Which way to look, to look t'ward him.

There mother watched my childhood days,
And guarded oft my early ways;
And growing old did labor on,

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

And planned and hoped for good anon—
O could I now, with patient joy,
Give her the help that tasked the boy.

When meager was our fare, then she
The larger share would give to me;
And if we were with plenty bless'd,
Then mother kept for me the best.
She was aspiring, striving she
Some gain of worth to have and be;
But seeming fate forbid the gain,
The less she had as life did wane.

Bring back to me my chances lost,
My days misspent, how great the cost.
O bring the heights that others win,
'Tis sad indeed, "it might have been,"
'Tis sad indeed, to learn in age,
How much the fool, how small the sage.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

THE TWO PRAYERS

O MOTHER, I is tired to-night,
And sleepy eyes grew dim;
Blue eyes that all the day were bright,
Joy welling to their brim.

My "dollie" she's been bad to-day,
And teddy bear's bad too;
And when they wants to have their way,
They makes more work to do.

I's dressed my "dollie" three, four times,
Her dresses white and blue;
And made her sleep; may be she dreams,
I wonders if she do

Now, say your pray'rs, her mother said;
And golden head bent low,
And mother's hand was on that head;
The pray'rful words came slow.

O "now I lay me down to sleep"—
O mother, will God hear?
"I pray the Lord my soul to keep"—
I wonders does He care?

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

He cares for little girls to-night
In all the world you say;
And makes the moonshine be so bright,
And sunshine all the day.

You say He cares for every bird,
How good He then must be;
And made the world, just by His word,
O then, how strong is He.

But mother, God gets tired I know,
So much He has to do;
He makes the pretty flowers grow,
And all the sky so blue.

And nights He sets out all the stars,
And mornings takes them in;
I wonders where the old moons ares
When the new moons begin.

Now mother, tell, please mother do,
For still she prattled on,
Tell me again of heav'n, will you,
The place where brother's gone?

I loved my baby brother here,
Afore he went away,
And now you say he's in God's care,
And I'll see him some day.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

But will I know him, will he grow
Up big where he now is?
I thinks he'll not, you keeps I know
The playthings that was his.

And you keeps all the things he wore,
I thinks then he'll not grow;
You keeps them nicer than afore,
For now you loves them so.

And, as she prattled on, there went
To heav'n and nestled there,
The sweetest thing earth ever sent;
It was a mother's prayer.

By faith she knew, as she prayed on,
That in His loving care,
Her budding flower to heav'n had gone,
To bloom in beauty there—

"If I should die before I wake,"
"I pray the Lord"—to keep—
I pray—her lips no further spake,
For she was fast asleep.

A KING I AM

A KING I am of mind and soul,
And truest joys in them I find,
If only I may them control;
Keep pure the soul, enrich the mind.

To gain by toil and fear to lose,
Beast like, bear wealth a journey on,
It were not kingly this to choose
That may go from us, and anon.

To bear no strife within the soul,
Nor strive for more than we may need,
And firmly seek some worthy goal;
It were to be a king indeed,

To sorrow for another's loss,
To gladden when some others gain,
Will help to free from selfish dross;
A truer king we learn to reign.

To crown our days with minds at rest,
Our souls all clear of guilty sting;
Were any king more truly bless'd,
Or reign, indeed, more truly king?

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

To treasure faith, and hope, and love,
Rule mind and soul with godly fear,
Will raise our kingdom far above
The kingdoms earthly—none its peer.

My kingdom's sure, nor moat, nor wall,
Nor battlements, nor forts immense;
A welcome it extends to all,
And innocence its sure defence.

And in like kingdoms all may reign,
For kingdoms like to all are free;
No serving millions to complain—
Come brothers, reign a king with me.

THE FABLE

'T WAS once we found a fable, writ
In homely prose, which was, to wit,
As we here write in rhyme for you;
You'll find much in this fable true.
And we thus write that you may know
Of Virtue and true Love, and so
Of fam'lies two we truly tell;
One lived in heav'n and one in hell—
Pray think not rude this word we say,
The fable tells it just this way.

The youngest child of th' heav'nly one
Is Pleasure, much sought, seldom won,
Daughter of Happiness is she;
And Happiness, you will agree,
Is born of Virtue, heav'nly maid,
No one can have, without her aid,
The other two. Now, as we tell,
This family all in heav'n did dwell.

The youngest child of th' other one
Is Pain who truly is the son
Of Misery who is the child
Of Vice, of aspect horrid, wild;

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

And as I do most truly tell,
This family dwelt alone in hell.

A middle place howe'er was found,
The earth, a most uncertain ground,
Where most uncertain beings dwell,
Whose final place none may foretell.
'Tis from the earth they surely go,
Fiat, most strange, hath made it so.
But some are virtuous, some are vile,
Some are found good, some filled with guile;
But in the worst some virtue's found,
And in the best doth vice abound;
So on this earth, 'tis strange to tell
That beings of both fam'lies dwell.

But Jupiter, the fable tells,
He, who in fabulous power excels,
Would make division and proclaim'd
That the two youngest we have nam'd,
Pleasure and Pain, on earth should meet,
On earth should dwell and ever greet
Mankind; and should between them share
These earthborn ones. Then this odd pair
Did quick agree that Pain should take
The vicious, and sweet Pleasure make
The virtuous happy; but did find,
'Tis sad 'tis so, that of mankind
None truly virtuous are and none

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Entirely vicious; so not one
Can Pain or Pleasure fully own,
Both have their claims and both are known.

And now this fable truth doth show,
But leaves mankind no place to go:
To heaven? no; he's partly vile.
To Hades? no; for oft the while
He's virtuous too. The fable's done,
But leaves unnamed the highest One
Of all the happy beings named
In heaven's happy family: Famed
Is He whose name is high above
All names—the matchless name of Love.
'Twas Love Himself, in hearts enshrin'd,
For the advantage of mankind,
To Calvary's bloody tree was nail'd;
And since by love He has prevail'd.
He's come to earth in hearts to dwell,
And dwelling, can all vice expel.
And now on earth mankind doth owe
To Him all good the Heav'ns bestow,
And when on earth they may not stay,
Through Him, to heav'n may find the way.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

MY DELAWARE

I wrote and published "My Delaware" at a time when the buying of votes was said to be prevalent in Delaware.

O DELAWARE, my Delaware,
Whose men are brave and women fair,
And fertile fields and balmy air,
We sing to thee, my Delaware.
May every virtue in thee shine,
And in thee every good combine,
And peace and plenty e'er be thine;
And love to God and thee be mine.

Refrain

My Delaware, we sing thy praise,
We sing thy praise in loving lays,
May noble ways prolong thy days,
And bless thy sons, my Delaware.

O fruitful land, we sing to thee,
New Castle, Kent, and Sussex, three,
Along the river, bay, and sea,
And truest love we bring to thee.
We sing to thee in joyous lays,
But pray to God corruption's ways

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

No more may dim thy shining days;
But freemen sing thee songs of praise.—*Refrain.*

O may thy sons, who blot thy name,
Corrupting freemen, feel thy shame,
And hang their heads, who thus defame
Their native land, thy goodly name—
Rouse, Delawareans, rouse we say,
The purpose noble to obey.
Be firm, be free, not led astray;
For manhood's more than gold to-day.—*Refrain.*

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

FATHER'S GONE

HIS coat and hat hang on the wall,
His cane is standing by the door;
When ev'ning shadows homeward call,
His faltering footsteps come no more.

Beside the hearth, his empty chair
To mem'ry seems a silent part
Of kindly face and silvered hair;
Its emptiness weighs on the heart.

The fruit trees planted by his hand,
In th' passing years with him grew old;
Companions they on native land
Until his useful days were told.

His faithful dog yet seeks a place,
Beside his master's empty chair,
And dreams he sees his master's face;
And wakes to find no master there.

His patient horse has missed the care,
His master long had given him;
Who'll now give feed and labor spare,
As limbs grow old and eyes grow dim?

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

His wealth was small nor wished he more
His name's unwrit on glory's page,
He found his home his richer store;
His honest life cheered his old age.

His helpmate yet some work to do,
With hands that have grown weak and thin,
Will, thoughtful, knit the long days through,
As if she'd knit glad mem'ries in.

A light serene seems round her glows,
A deep content is on her brow;
How small seems earth and smaller grows,
How large to her is heaven now
Since father's gone!

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

TO-NIGHT

I'M thinking to-night if my mother may be
With me, as I'm thinking, and even may see
The changes that time has brought, even to me—
I'm thinking to-night.

I wonder to-night if she knows I am here,
And watches me yet, as in infantile year;
And loving me still, if she always is near—
I wonder to-night.

I'm hoping to-night, and in hoping find joy,
When th' earthly no longer my spirit shall cloy,
We'll meet and we'll greet, where no partings alloy—
I'm hoping to-night.

I've gladness to-night as I'm looking above,
And trusting in Him who a mother did love;
And earnest our mothers we'll meet in His Love—
I've gladness to-night.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

YOUTH AND AGE

YOUTH

TO projects high oft youthful lives aspire,
And cheering hopes oft youthful hearts inspire.
Youth sees the days all bright with glory, shine,
And sees, in visions, all the good combine.
There's love, and joy, and expectations high,
And castles rise, in airy grandeur, nigh.
The world is bright, in brightest colors dress'd,
And days of youth, with youthful joys, are bless'd.
A glory's over land, and sea, and sky,
And nature's order charms the youthful eye.

AGE

But time, with measured tread, its way doth keep,
And youth goes onward to forgotten sleep.
Time steals, unbid, upon the youthful day,
And digs the graves of loved ones on its way;
Oft mars the joys of expectations high,
And dulls the prospects that so pleased the eye.
Breaks happy homes, and sometimes happy hearts,
When cherished love lies dead and hope departs.
Nor wealth nor honor can the loss assuage;
All earthly joys are lessened to old age.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

A BADGE MUST WEAR

A STORY old does history tell
About the poor of county Kent—
Tells they in Camden town did dwell,
A now well nigh forgot event.

The house remains, but of the poor
All is forgot, save each must wear
On the left arm, to mark them sure,
A red cloth badge a-flaming there.

On't Roman letters, plain P. K.,
So't would be known, where e'er they went,
By lettered brand which told that they
Were of the pauper poor of Kent.

If all, however, who are poor,
A badge must wear to mark ourself,
And show we all are paupers sure,
As poor in land, or purse, or pelf;

Or poor in faith, or heart, or soul;
Or poor in morals, poor in years,
Or poor in hope, or poor in goal
Unreached, or in some gloomy fears:

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Or poor in loved ones, poor in mind,
Or poor in burdens we must bear
Alone; then surely we would find
That all mankind a badge must wear.

And if the badge should be of size,
To show how poor each one might be,
From low to high, without disguise,
Or way to hide our poverty

And all our seeming to betray;
Might we not find that equal we?
And find, at last, it just this way,
Our badges all one size would be?

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

O WINDS, BLOW SOFT TO-NIGHT

AS blowing, blowing, over land and sea,
O winds, what message may you bring to me?
As 'round our pendant world ye whirl and blow,
Tell me to-night some hidden things you know.
Tell me if happy spirits talk with you—
Talk of loved ones, as seeming they would woo
The loved of earth; as if, in mansions bless'd,
Mem'ries of earth-love bring a sweeter rest.

O winds, from those who loved me long ago,
Bring me some message they may wish me know.
Tell me of absent ones I loved so well,
Now seeming lost to me—O can you tell
Of loved ones long away—gone far away—
Gone to the life beyond, to live for aye?

And from this earthly life, may I not send
On your soft wings to-night, that seeming blend
With whispers low, some cheering, loving word
In life I might have said, too long deferr'd?
Or send the deep regret, that they may know
How keen the sorrow and the heavy woe
Of those who, wrong'd the living, wrong the dead?
O winds, blow soft as on ye onward tread

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Your airy way, for loved ones come to-night
From fairest clime, with footfalls airy light:
And now I seem to feel of vanished hands
The touch, seem fanned by wings of aërial bands
That calm the mind and fill, with new delight,
The waiting heart—O winds, blow soft to-night.

THE INDIAN'S FAITH

I LIKE the Indian's simple trust,
To whom all nature's dear;
In heav'n he'd have, it seems but just,
The souls of all things here.

We count ourselves the lords of all
Created things below,
And e'en the way to heav'n forestall;
The Indian does not so.

But out of nature thinks he springs,
A part of nature's plan;
Thinks beasts and all created things,
Have souls as well as man.

Thinks in the "happy hunting ground"
All things of his will be,
Their spirits there with his be found;
In spirit land be free.

His bow and arrows or his gun,
In spirit likeness take,
To hunt the spirit game that run
In spirit wood and brake.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

And use again the things he's made,
Have all the things that grow;
And see the spirit hill and glade,
And spirit rivers flow.

See mount, and plain, and marsh, and bog,
And thinks o'er all there'll be
His pony and his faithful dog,
To "bear him company."

Thinks th' fleeing deer he'll still pursue,
Have all that's now his own;
In spirit form, will use anew
The things he's always known.

Thinks there his wigwam home will be,
And squaw his food prepare,
His children climb upon his knee,
And love him even there.

It is a sweet and cheerful faith,
The heart must feel it so,
That the untutored Indian hath;
Might we no harder know.

THE MISER

YOU see him covetous and old,
His face made hard by love of gold.
Untrue to God, untrue to man,
He has small place in nature's plan.
Alone, he bends to golden store,
Alone, he counts it o'er and o'er:
He deals for gain to latest breath
And bargains for a miser's death.

His golden store small pleasure brings,
But arms the fear of death with stings.
Instead of pleasure in his gain,
The wish for more but gives him pain.
Increasing gains his coffers fill,
He sighs, for gains "are wanting still."
He leaves his kind to live alone,
Or cares for none, save for his own;
And none love him, save on pretense
In hope for his when he goes hence.

If to the place of prayer he goes,
Not love, but fear of future woes
Oft prompts his prayer which can not go
To Mercy-seat; for all should know

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

That prayer, induced by fear alone,
The loving Father does not own.

What must eternal future hold
For him whose love is love of gold?
Whose heartless greed oft turns the poor,
Unalmsed, away from closed door.

Perchance, as he is selfish here,
Contemns his kind, holds gold more dear,
Away from gold, for which he's striven,
Through endless space he may be driven.
Beyond all worlds of life and light,
Forever drive through rayless night;
Where, in the terror of despair,
The poorest wretch, he had no care
For here, would be a wealth untold;
Beyond all wealth of gain and gold.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

THE OLD HOME PLACE

I WALK along the well-known way,
I oft walked o'er in childhood's day,
Barefoot, by mother's side.
My sunburnt feet oft trod the road
And pathways near my youth's abode—
They since have wandered wide.

I know so well the scenes around,
And all of youth's familiar ground
Pressed by my boyhood feet.
Yet gone is much I used to know;
Gone is my home of long ago:
A mem'ry sad and sweet.

Gone are the barn and sheds I knew,
The trees and well-sweep from my view—
Ah! such old friends were we.
The balmy air and bending sky,
The old pear tree and apple nigh,
Alone remain with me.

Our garden was where, now the ground
Untilled, rank growing weeds are found
In place of flowers gay;

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Not even now a flower grows wild,
Where flowers once in beauty smil'd;
And where I oft did play.

The apple trees, in early bloom,
Are gone, with all their rich perfume;
They gladness gave to me:
And later, when the fruit was ripe,
All russet, red and varied stripe,
A pleasant sight to see.

When 'tis I view youth's scenes around,
Walk o'er again the well-known ground,
Again the past I see;
And in my mind the lost abide,
In thought, they're walking by my side;
They speak again to me.

The present scarce appears to be,
More real th' past oft seems to me—
And rises to my view.
In thought, I see the old home place,
The old familiar lines I trace,
In youth so well I knew.

Again the rose blooms by the door,
The balm of Gilead's shade is o'er
The grass-grown place so green;
Again I am a boy at play,

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Under the trees the livelong day,
Oft by my mother seen.

I catch the true, the past I see,
The present shadowy is to me,
As misty daylight gleams.
In contemplation, thus I view
The scenes of youth, youth to renew;
'Tis only age that seems.

To me the forms are strange I meet,
Not these, but other forms I greet,
More real they to me—
Again they hail me by the way,
Again they cry to me "good-day;"
They are the ones I see.

The friendships old, the early love,
Come back to me, as from above,
They border the divine;
They find their places in the heart,
In which the present has no part;
How surely they are mine.

And yet of them I scarce can speak,
To tell of them words too weak,
Though placed with nicest art.
As wordless prayer is truly great,
So are the thoughts we cannot state,
Because they're of the heart.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

My heart goes back to wander where
My days were days devoid of care,
And life devoid of pain;
'Tis there I find the real true,
The sure, unworded truth to woo,
And live my youth again.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

O HOLY LOVE!

O HOLY Love! our best estate,
Thou didst our needs anticipate:
Alone, Thou fillest endless space;
And, in Thy love, mankind embrace,
All doubts and fears to dissipate,

And mind and soul to elevate;
And highest hopes to animate,
With full redemption for our race,
O Holy Love!

'Twas Thou O Love, compassionate,
Who gave to us an Advocate;
In Him we see Thy loving face,
Through Him we feel Thy saving grace,
And know forgiveness adequate,
O Holy Love!

THE QUAKER MEETING-HOUSE

At Camden, Delaware, is located one of the two remaining Quaker meeting-houses on this peninsula, below Wilmington, that are now used for worship. Formerly there were several, and the peninsula is poorer because of the decrease in the number of these people. This house was built in the year 1805. Many of the best citizens who lived in this town and vicinity, are buried here.

IN Camden town in County Kent,
Where nature much of good has lent,
From highway back a little space,
We see the Quaker meeting-place.

Great oak at gate-way long has stood
With outspread limbs, as if it would
Say—peace and mercy on you fall;
A welcome here I give to all—
I've welcomed Youth so glad and gay,
I've welcomed Age that came to pray,
Welcomed the bride who came to wed,
Welcomed, with sombre shade, the dead.
The hands that planted me long gone,
Instinct with life, I still live on;
But soon I'll go and be forgot,
With all I've welcomed to this spot.

We pass the gate, by great old oak,
To view where meet the Quaker folk

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Who love this place, and yet do keep,
For these who live, for those who sleep,
The old brick house, the graves beside:
The living pass, the dead abide.
The tow'ring pines their vigils keep
And shadow these who come to weep.
On grass-grown graves, the dews of night
Are formed to greet the morning light,
With rainbow tints, as if above
This mortal place, immortal love.

We go within, 'tis silent now
Where God has heard the silent vow:
Here silent grasp of hand with hand;
The human touch, hearts understand.
The seats are plain, the pine-laid floor,
The gallery old and paneled door;
And all without and all within,
Combine, to lead away from sin.

'Tis here in silence scarcely broken,
Or 'tis with words "of fitness spoken,"
They worship on the Sabbath day;
If silent lips, with hearts that pray.
They are not called by clam'rous bell,
There is no organ's sounding swell.
They have no studied, written creed
That scarce can help the soul's great need;
No rubric rules or suasive speech,

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

The will of God, to try to teach.
The Light Divine, eternal Word,
The inward, guiding Voice heard;
'Tis these they claim the soul to raise,
And feel how pure is silent praise.

We're told that in the by-gone days,
These people sought, in mercy's ways,
To help the slaves their freedom gain,
Who fleeing, would have fled in vain
But for the help and hiding place,
The needed food and resting space:
Thus is this place, by freemen trod,
Sacred to Freedom and to God.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

WHERE SHE RESTS

I AM thinking to-day
Of a grave far away,
Over river, and mountain, and mead;
Where they laid her to sleep
In the under-ground deep,
As I saw in the day of my need.

I remember the scene
And how, looking, I'd glean,
From those standing in sympathy 'round,
An abatement of sorrow
For the day and the morrow,
For my heart with her went in the ground.

I oft fancy the place,
For the very long space
Is naught to the mind to pass o'er;
With the swiftness of thought,
In a moment I've sought
Where she rests, and is weary no more.

Oft in fancy I meet,
And in feeling I greet
Her spirit that seems by my side;

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

The past rises to view
And I live it anew,
And its joys, in my heart, yet abide.

I oft wish I might see
The grave sacred to me,
Few spots are so dear to my heart;
On kind nature I call,
That her beauty might fall
On this grave, with her gentlest art.

Come ye birds of the spring
And ye happy a-wing,
Sing low and fly soft as ye go,
So ye wake not my love;
Or low cooing the dove,
Coo lower—she's sleeping, I know.

And the light of the morn
And ye rays newly born,
Touch gently the place where she lies;
And ye fadings of light
And oncomings of night,
Come slowly, to cover my prize.

And ye trees all around
And ye grasses and ground,
And ye blooming and growing, gay things,

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Your soft vigils must keep,
For the one that's asleep;
While the loss to my waking heart clings.

And ye dews of the night
And ye rains that invite
The bright flowers in beauty to grow;
Form ye softly I say,
And fall gently I pray,
As if blessings ye would thus bestow.

And ye stars that are bright
And the moon's milder light,
Give brightness and sheen to this place;
Or if darkness should hide,
Then in darkness abide
The hope of a morning's bright face.

And by night and by day,
Come ye breezes at play,
To blow soft and more softly to blow;
Thus all nature to bless,
And in beauty to dress
The dear place as the cent'ries flow.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

WEALTH

WE talk of wealth and of its uses,
We often talk of its abuses,
We often rail at those who make it,
Yet willing would we be to take it;
And in its use or its abuse,
Might with our morals play the "deuce."

We often think the world our debtor
Because some others may fare better.
We moan because the millions missed us,
And sweet dame Fortune's never kissed us.
But we had better cease repining,
'Tis better we should think of dining
On the plain fare we may be able,
To spread upon our daily table
With merry hearts, for that makes feasting,
That riches likely is the least in.

For wealth, may be, the priest may thrive us,
Or preacher preaching may revive us.
If rich, in life, you'd buy adorning,
In death, with it, they'd buy the mourning.
You'd buy fine house and auto rolling,
And when you died, the bell's deep tolling

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Would music be to heirs then riding
Behind the hearse that you'd abide in.

So better you should cease your wanting
The riches others may be vaunting;
For with deceit may be they greeted
Their fellows, and both lied and cheated.
May be you would not take the risk in
All the fine wealth that they so frisk in,
And take with it their chance with "Nickie"
To get their souls, if they've been tricky.
'Tis certain none can trick "Old Hornie,"
But he'll trick you, with all your blarney;
And will, despite of all your riches:
With lies he many a soul bewitches.

Whenever you are busy trading,
And, chance, the truth you are evading,
"Old Nickie" 's sure to be attending,
And all his help to you be lending;
And after cares not for your praying,
What priest or preacher may be saying,
Or for your poor soul's destitution—
Just so you make no restitution.

He "fries more fat" than politician,
Who buys an office on condition,
To share the profits with the bosses,
And let the people bear the losses.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

But do not think, by this I've written,
That you may play like foolish kitten;
For if you're wise, have brawn, are brainy,
You will save for the day that's "rainy."

Well, now to state the true position,
And manhood's true and best condition,
To have a home, and bread, and morals,
To have true friends and never quarrels;
And add to these a conscience pure,
And you have wealth that will endure:
With hope of heav'n and peace of mind,
The truest riches you will find.

THE SEA BURIAL

THE ship had slacked her rapid way,
Over the restless deep;
And hard, but gentle hands that day
Cared for the one "asleep."

With bare, bowed heads, a prayer was said
For him thus far from home;
In canvas coffin he lay dead,
O'er seas no more to roam.

His comrades take him gently up,
Perchance a tear did fall—
In life there's many a bitter cup
We drink at duty's call.

At given sign, they let him down;
He slowly went away,
Along the way, and then adown
From comradeship and day.

He sunk into the deep immense,
And vast in its extent;
And left no mark as he went hence,
Or place of monument.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

A voyage strange, a way unknown,
Myster'ous, deep descent;
Into profundities alone
He went; and farther went.

At first he went swift as a fall,
Then slow and slower went;
He slackened, as the watery wall
Grew dense in his descent.

He went down in the gulf profound,
The dark'ning sun grew dim—
And then went out, in waters drown'd,
A rayless night for him.

And still the waters mount and mount,
And still he slowly goes,
And denser waters still surmount;
Above the volume grows.

He is more dead than any dead,
In this far, ocean keep,
With mounting waters o'er his head,
In an unfathomed deep.

Strange forms these waters do infest
In dark, deep ocean's cave;
Strange madrepores branch on his breast
And stranger waters lave.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Strange things of life will feed on him;
Strange eyeless, bloodless forms
Will gather 'round each part and limb,
In creeping, horrid swarms.

Such horrid life for him makes room,
With horrors now he'll lie
In deep, unknown, unfathomed gloom,
Unlit by any sky.

Sun, stars, nor moon, shall light his tomb,
Beneath the stormy wave;
Nor songbirds sing, nor flowers bloom
Above his earthless grave.

No eye shall see the horrid place
Beyond light's brightest ray;
No earth-born one of him find trace,
Nor loved one come to pray.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

THE LOST WAY

THE Angel stood at heaven's gate,
The blessed around in joy did wait
An entrance in.
And came there one, in humble guise,
With timid feet and downcast eyes,
Because of sin.

She said she'd lost the Way awhile,
To find again, by many a mile
On life's rough road,
Had others passed her on the way,
And still, with weary steps, that day
She bore her load.

She moaned her sins, by turns she's dumb,
And to the gate she'd scarcely come,
In hope and fear.
The Angel heard her lowly moan,
And then he told that Heav'n doth own,
With special care

All those, who lose the Way awhile,
And then returning, own their guile,
Repentance true—

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

And she went in before them all,
Who'd never lost the Way at all;
Scarce sinning knew.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

O SILVER MOON!

THE silver moon looks o'er the lea,
And o'er the restless, rolling sea,
And o'er the mountains, hills, and plains,
And o'er the fields of golden grains;
And cities great and village fair,
And flowery meads, with balmy air,
And forests dark and rapid streams,
And placid lakes, lit with her beams;
And all earth's wonders doth she see—
And makes a path of light to me.

O thou full, white, bright, silver moon!
With purest light, night's richest boon;
On thee I looked in infancy,
And, innocent, I reached for tnee.
Thought thee a thing that soon might go,
But e'er 'twere long I learned to know,
That after I am long away;
Even to earth's remotest day,
Thou wilt shine on, with argent eye,
Illume earth's depths from depths on high.
That thy unchanged, yet changing face,
Will shine when our ephemeral race,
Has on our planet left no trace
Or thing to mark its oft used place.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

As riding on thy lum'nous way,
Thou seemst to mock our short-lived day,
And smil'st at all our human skill,
As thy soft light vast spaces fill.

O moon, so high o'er earth and sea,
One high o'er all created thee;
Bid thee to shine on earth below,
Full orb'd, or with a silver bow:
But in thy sphere so high to see
A higher sphere is given me.
The heavens pass, shalt thou not go?
Fiat divine hath ordered so:
But light divine shall live in me
Through all the vast eternity.
God doth mankind with soul endow,
So soulless moon, I'm more than thou;
For thou canst only onward shine,
While love, and hope, and faith are mine.

When thou art old and dim, forsooth,
By grace, I'll have eternal youth;
And shall live on in endless noon
Whate'er chance thee, O silver moon!

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

WHO WILL ROLL AWAY THE STONE?

“**W**HO shall roll us away the stone?”
Who will help us in our sore needs?
Such anxious queries oft our own
For time, we know, all weakness breeds.

Some deeper sorrow may be ours,
Some grievous loss we may not tell,
Some growing shadow o'er us low'rs;
Some dread that time will not dispel.

In life, oft hopeless, bear our loss,
In death alone some sorrows cease;
Wish none might know our heavy cross
That we bear on, without surcease.

No words can tell some deep regret,
Nor reason still some wearing fears;
No Lethe's draught make us forget
The heavy sorrows of our years.

We think how gladly we'd exchange
With other troubled lives we see,
And take their burdens, howe'er strange
If they would bear our misery.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

And yet we know not, cannot know,
The burdens that our fellows bear;
Oft cheerful faces they may show,
Oft breaking hearts are hidden there.

Oft friends are laughing, spring like, gay,
Seems they and May are glad together;
But could we see their hearts to-day,
We'd find their lives December weather.

And we cry out, in night of need,
For one to roll the stone away;
But we forget, or slightly heed,
The way's oft plain at break of day.

Yes we forget, so oft forget,
How sure God's mercy doth abound;
And howsoe'er we were beset,
Some present help was ever found.

Sometimes forget, indeed forget,
The dear ones God has given us;
And how they've been a coronet,
To shield our hearts, by loving us.

The Marys found the stone away,
And all their questionings were vain;
The night broke into gladdest day—
Eternal gladness is the gain.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

The stone for us oft rolled away,
Though all our lives we've suffered fear;
And shall we doubt, when 'tis we may
By doubting, drift beyond His care?

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

OLD CAMDEN TOWN

IN th' little state of large intent,
Is Camden town in County Kent;
Scarce prospect can be found more fair
In all the land of Delaware.

May be you've heard its history old,
And of its cheerful homes been told;
Or chance you've friends or kindred here
Whose love and welcome you hold dear.
Or here you lived your youthful days,
And mem'ry often to it strays;
For th' heart untraveled, as we roam,
Oft goes to its ancestral home.

Here stands the Whatcoat Church, a name
Borne by an older church of fame
A century gone, that nearby stood,
Built by a newborn brotherhood.

And here, a century gone and more,
The old stage coach came to her door,
With clatter, din and much display,
And change the horses and away!

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

With crack of whip, by driver bold,
As 'round and 'round the round wheels roll'd.

And tavern house, of other days,
Stands at the crossing of the ways;
Long years ago a trav'ler's rest,
With old-time welcome for each guest.

From tavern house across the way,
There yet remains, until this day,
A building of more ancient mold;
That once the county poor did hold;
Where the infirm, the sick, the blind,
Some dole of charity did find.

And other buildings, century old,
Built by her pioneers, we're told;
Homes where they met and talked, perchance,
Of the traditions and romance
Of other years, when fathers came
From older lands, in Freedom's name.
Now oft forgot their names and fame,
While this old town is much the same:
And, if the many years are past,
Since time you saw old Camden last;
You'd find slight change, save as you'd trace,
In those who pass, strange form and face.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

A METHODIST

WHO is the one whose frugal way
Is, seeming, odd this lavish day—
Peculiar, somewhat, some might say?
A Methodist.

Who's of the true and trusted kind,
Firm in the faith, fixed in his mind,
And does not change with every wind?
A Methodist.

Who does not mind the modern ball,
Nor play at cards in home or hall;
Is never near a whiskey brawl?
A Methodist.

Comes the parading, garish show,
With songs, and dancing girls aglow,
All tinsel dressed—who does not go?
A Methodist.

Who does not know the sporting news,
All forms of gambling too eschews;
Knows not the vileness of the stew?
A Methodist.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

To whom are fashions in our dress,
And all the fashions in excess,
Mere trifles all, and even less?
A Methodist.

Whose pray'rs impromptu are not fine,
But touch the heart, the thoughts refine;
And oft must reach the Ear Divine?
A Methodist's.

Who scarce knows theologic lore,
Less of the creeds—an ancient store—
But, day by day, who loves God more?
A Methodist.

Of rites and forms, who knows but few,
And who knows less of doctrines new—
Who holds the old, the tried, the true?
A Methodist.

Whose upright life to all's a guide,
To justly do his ruling pride,
If erring, errs on mercy's side?
A Methodist.

Who reads his Bible, knows it well,
Can of its daily comforts tell,
Has found it doth all fears dispel?
A Methodist.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Who knows God's help in human loss,
And feels there's One helps bear his cross;
Has found much earthly gain is dross?
A Methodist.

Who knows God's care extends to all,
Below His love no soul can fall;
Knows on His love all souls may call?
A Methodist.

Now, to conclude, who will deny—
Perchance, some scarcely can tell why—
But truth to tell, who would not die
A Methodist.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

A LAND UNKNOWN

WE journey to a land unknown,
In a way by us untrod;
Would have this land for selves alone,
Though it belongs to God:

And He may give to whom He will,
To beast as well as man,
And thus His pleasure may fulfill,
Though we that pleasure scan.

Concerning us, His will we know,
But small our knowledge is
Concerning th' good He may bestow
On other creatures His.

The beasts we love may go with us,
For God can have it so;
And heaven be the dearer thus
Made glad by love we know.

Our faithful friends oft suffer here,
Rude hands misuse them so;
But we may hope, the hope is dear,
A heaven they may know.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

My patient beasts, I'd speak for you
If men some heed would pay
And mercy give, e'en justice do;
No better could they pray.

He spoke the blessing, and it falls
On those who mercy show;
Be merciful, to us He calls,
And you shall mercy know.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

THE GREAT WIDE WAY

These lines were written and published at the time the people of Delaware were much interested in the then recently proposed du Pont boulevard and seemingly favorable to it. But since then there seems to be a reversal of opinion and a change of sentiment with regard to it, and now, 1914, it is likely the boulevard will not be built.

THE boulevard of du Pont fame—
'Tis well there's nothing in a name,
For when we write the de Nemours
It seems to rhyme all right with poor—
'Tis only seems, the world declares
The du Ponts all are millionaires.
They're honored, worthy, wise, and grave
And are a soldier family brave;
So boulevard comes handy in
With bulwark, rampart, near of kin;
And, in this quiet land of peace,
From dull ennui is some release—
How French mars English rhyme you see
In de Nemours and by ennui.

The makers of our laws began
With lawyers three this law to scan,
They also heard much argument,
Much explanation, some dissent—

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

They voted, yes! may be 'twas wise;
Some voting largely on surmise.
Thus, highway gift was fixed in law
So plain, there scarcely seemed a flaw.
A splendid gift most did declare—
Who's got the gift I'm not aware;
The wise in this do not agree,
So if you'd know just wait and see.
But while you wait please try to find,
By all the rules you have in mind;
Or if rules fail, then magic try,
To find, I say, the reason why
Two hundred feet, in width complete,
To make a road of thirty feet.

But listen now, I'll counsel give,
If on this highway you should live;
Here is your home that you have made,
By work, by care, by honest trade;
Or may be 'tis your sire's devise,
Your childhood home you highly prize;
But on some day, with much ado,
With level, chain, and transit too,
And auto big, and retinue;
Like shining gold or ormolu,
Comes boulevard surveying crew
Your humble self to interview—
When will I with this rhyme get through—
Then you must humbly doff your hat,

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

And hear request made plain and pat
For right-of-way across your home,
Through house, or yard, or fields of loam;
Then give your land to millionaire,
Indeed, his plan is wondrous fair,
 For as you listen to his plea,
 You learn he'll give the state, in fee,
 A highway thirty feet to be,
 If you'll give him two hundred—see!
To ask a price if you should dare,
Nor give, nor sell you dare declare,
Then you'll not patriotic be,
And troubles sore you're like to see
From those, who oft have much to say,
Or have to give no right-of-way.

Now we best pray, in road affairs,
Lord, save us all from millionaires;
Or that we all may equal be,
Lord, make us millionaires, our plea.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

THREE GRACES

FAITH

WHEN drawn by some seductive sin,
Or hidden sins our souls assail,
Or passions riot run within;
By faith, repentant, we prevail.

When sorrows come and first-felt loss,
And sore bereavements hard to bear,
By faith, we seek th' uplifted cross
And find our gain and solace there.

Through Christ, we're justified by faith,
Made strong by faith, like seers of old;
And in the empty hour of death,
Must, of all wealth, be wealth untold.

HOPE

Along with faith comes joyous hope,
'Tis life's sure solace, misery's friend;
That in some darkened day doth ope
A path of light until its end.

Companion sweet along life's way,
How oft thy cheering rays we see,

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

That brightest shine in sorrow's day;
For sorrow shows us God and thee.

When dimly grows the path we've trod,
And light, unknown on "land or sea,"
Shines on the way that leads to God,
Then hope is lost in Victory.

CHARITY

Through charity, we truly find
From love of God springs love for man;
"As sounding brass," inconstant wind,
If love crown not our every plan.

How beautiful are faith and hope,
But, wanting char'ty, incomplete;
A grace that will more surely ope
The gates of rest to pilgrim feet.

And char'ty done we'll never miss,
'T'll wait for us in th' land of rest;
Where for us Heaven's highest bliss
Will be to see our fellows bless'd.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

ASSURANCE

HE, who hath found some fledgeling's nest,
Doth know the fledgeling's flown;
But knows it finds a place of rest
Somewhere to him unknown.

He, who some chrysalis hath found,
May know the grub is gone;
But knows a thing of beauty's 'round
And flies in sunshine on.

He, who hath found some lonely grave,
Doth know the soul hath fled;
But knows beyond the Love to save
It cannot, hath not sped.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

REHOBOTH, DELAWARE

THE rolling billows break upon the shore,
A smooth and pleasant shore that stays the store
Of waters, in immense profusion, spread
Upon great ocean's deep, myster'ous bed—

Great ocean! vast, profound; no words of man
Can tell thy grandeur, nor his wisdom scan
Thy mysteries. The learned have sought in vain
To know thy wonders, as well seek to chain
Thy storm-tossed waves, or delve until thy deeps
Whence none return: where the Eternal keeps
Unsearched profundities none may explore—
Proud, puny man is stayed upon thy shore.

Imagination, when we muse on thee,
Awakes. As breaking wave on wave we see,
We think of Him from whose Almighty Hand
Were poured the waters, rolling on the strand—
Of all the works of nature—all are His—
Thou, more than all, proclaimest that God Is.

Ere Eden, ere man became a living soul,
Were elder ocean's primal swell and roll;
And groves, and flowers, and the singing birds,

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

All nature's beauty, and the moaning words
Of ocean all were here and told of Him—
The ocean moans His might. The flowers hymn
His love. To-day I've list to ocean's roar,
Have heard its deeper voice, and shall I more
Lack faith in God? On ocean looked to-day
And doubt was gone. I felt I must obey
His high commands that roll upon the heart;
Of ocean's roll a seeming counterpart—
O love, be strong in me like ocean's roll.
O faith, break deep and flood within my soul.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

LOVE AND LIFE

WE love this world we now are in,
Though ever 'tis, we know,
Shadowed by death and marred by sin
Weighted by human woe.

We love the morn and daylight's close,
We love the sun-lit day,
The moon-lit night and night's repose;
Though transitory they.

We love the fields and flowery meads,
And all the smiling land:
The ground supplies our earthly needs
And blooms at His command.

We love the sights and scenes around,
And shores the waters lave;
And yet must pass the solid ground,
As pass the winds and wave.

Must pass this life we love to live—
We trust to life beyond,
But often fear what death may give,
And fearing, may despond;

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THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Forgetting Him who lived this life,
Who knows its joy and pain;
Who knows the doubts, the hopes, the strife,
That meet in human brain.

Who came to bring us purest joy,
And told of mansions fair;
Where we our highest pow'rs employ
And rise in glory there.

Where we will all His mercies know,
Earth's failures understand;
With senses new, in wisdom grow
And love the glory land—

O joyous life! we'll love thee more,
Because of love for this:
We've tasted life, though small its store
Compared with endless bliss.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

FORGIVENESS

WHEN Jesus taught in temple old
 Sublimest truths, till then untold,
The Pharisees, with foulest hate,
A woman brought; to Him did state
Her crime, the law. But He did know
The malice of the wileful foe;

And stooping down, "wrote on the ground,"
While they who tempt Him gathered 'round,
And asked Him o'er, with knitted brow,
And o'er again, "What sayest thou"
Of her who stands in guilt and shame?
And urged again, with loud exclaim.

He lifted up his bowèd head,
And to them all He kindly said,
"Let" sinless one "first cast a stone;"
And stooping down was soon alone:
For as He wrote they all went out;
The woman standing yet in doubt.

Again, He lifts His lowly head,
And this time to the woman said,
And "thine accusers," where are they?

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Hath none "condemned thee" here to-day?
She said, no, "no man, Lord," with voice
Of one who scarcely sinned of choice.

Then, "neither I," go, "sin no more."
In all the world's preceptive lore,
Scarce nobler words were ever said
Than "sin no more." May we be led,
By precepts like, along life's ways,
To higher good and happy days.

His gracious words with us are found,
He only wrote upon the ground.
What 'twas He wrote we do not know,
His words along the cent'ries flow,
We hear, and con them o'er and o'er,
I'll not condemn, go, "sin no more."

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

WHY "OLD KRIS" COULD NOT GET IN

These stanzas are founded largely on facts. As I am informed, one of these boys, in manhood, became, and is yet, a leading attorney at law.

TWO little boys in city great,
No mother's love, no father's care;
A seeming hard and cruel fate,
Had fallen on this homeless pair.

They sold the papers on the street
With world-wide news from everywhere;
Yet in the wide world, few to greet,
No one to love them, none to care.

When night came on and darkness fell,
These homeless boys to bed would go—
The oddest bed, but I must tell,
'Twas in a goods-box, strange to know

Behind a building great and tall,
A place of merchandise and trade,
There, in a big box, next the wall,
Themselves a bed of straw had made.

And thus they were at Christmas time,
With all its cheerful sights and sound;

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

They heard the Christmas bells a-chime
And saw the Christmas joys around.

They saw the many little boys,
With clothes so warm and faces bright;
Their candies and their pretty toys,
And heard their shoutings of delight.

Thus 'twas of Santa Claus they heard
And how he cared for every boy;
And 'twas this thought that somehow stirr'd
Their youthful hearts to youthful joy.

And too they heard that if they'd hang
Their stockings up, 'twas surely so,
With prancing deers and bells a-clang,
"Old Kris" would fill from top to toe.

They hung their socks, with boyish will,
And went to sleep, as best they could,
And thought "Old Kris" with sweets would fill—
Poor waifs! they must have dreamed he would.

And morning came, glad Christmas morn,
And Joy was welling to its brim:
It was the day that Christ was born;
And even they had heard of Him.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

They looked to see, with great delight,
Their old socks filled, but, sad to tell,
"Old Kris" had passed them in the night—
How sad to them such loss befell.

'Twas then the tears began to flow,
To feel that they were thus forgot;
That this good friend should use them so—
On Christmas morn so sad a lot.

But soon they thought and reasoned why,
That good "Old Kris" did nothing bring:
You could not guess, if you should try,
Just how they reasoned out the thing.

The way they reasoned it is this,
As they sat grieving there within,
They had no chimney for "Old Kris,"
And so "Old Kris" could not get in.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

THE OLD BURIAL PLACE

At Camden, Delaware, is an old, untended burial ground, which at this time (1913) is overgrown with brush and vines and is a dreary place.

ALONG beside the road one sees,
With brush, debris, old tombs, and trees,
Where limbs stretch out and tall branch waves,
An old, abandoned place of graves.
The brush and vines are thickly grown,
The wall in front is overthrown:
By thoughtful inclination led,
We spend an hour with the dead.

When thus we are alone with Death,
The mind strange thoughts encountereth:
A troubled soul may be our own,
When thus we meet these thoughts alone.
And conscience, to its office true,
Calls up our lives in swift review;
The claims of God it does enthrone,
We too must meet those claims alone.
An inward monitor is found,
In such an hour, the soul to wound
For sins, long since, well nigh forgot—
For sins, by prior sins begot:
And thus we dwell in thought profound,
Intensified by all things 'round.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

O depths! O heights! of human needs,
Beyond the help of human creeds;
'Tis hope must cheer, 'tis faith must trust;
He knows our needs and He is just.
He knows our love of life, and He
That love must fill eternally:
Else why that love to us He gave,
If 'tis our lives end at the grave?

O Death! by thee and sin we're slain,
But Christ is risen, we'll rise again.
And when this earthly life is spann'd,
He leadeth to the promised land—
A graveless land, where Death's no more
And life's divine, and we adore
Him whom we trust, to Him we're known,
And He will never lose His own.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

WASTED TIME

WE oft complain that time is short,
Yet long may seem some waiting part
Between us and our goal.
'Tis often youth thinks manhood best,
And manhood, thinking of some quest,
Would often time control.

The politician time might give
For wished-for place, that he might live
From further seeking free:
The lover hasten on apace
The days between him and the face
That he'd so gladly see.

Thus, though our time runs fast away,
Yet, tiresome is some tedious day
That, seeming, drags along;
For while we would our lives extend,
We'd hasten time to serve our end,
Till when the time seems long.

Though short, we waste, oft by delay,
The precious hours and days away,
Or worse, in folly share:

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Oft act as time would never end,
Or past, it wasted days could mend;
So little seeming care.

If we spend time in slothful ways,
Should we complain that few our days
As thus we waste them so;
And shut the door against the good
Of mind and fortune, which we could
On self by work bestow?

Should we waste time at rout or play,
And think to find our good that way,
Sure disappointed we:
Such trifles soon upon us cloy,
The heart soon asks if these be joy;
From folly would be free.

Our idle ways corrode and rust
God-given pow'rs we hold in trust
For our eternal gain.
And sloth enfeebles soul and mind,
Upon our highest hopes doth bind,
At last, a hopeless chain.

For all improvement, we must pay
And pay in labor, day by day,
And paying not we fail,

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

And failing, life will run to waste,
As run the days away in haste;
We'll chances lost bewail.

'Tis said, 'tis true, we cannot be
Both innocent and idle; we,
If idle, wrongs will do:
How oft our idle hours have been
The paths that led us into sin;
In after life to rue.

The thought of failure oft deters,
And makes us slaves to useless fears;
We projects high forsake.
They surely fail who fear to strive,
And only they can surely thrive
Who boldly undertake.

Why idle, when it is we may
Spend time in ways that always pay,
In joy of worth and gain?
Good fortune both for life and mind,
In work and thought, we surely find;
Enriching heart and brain.

A joyous life is often found,
And cherished expectations crown'd,
In work and duty done,

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

By work we kindly cheer may give,
To help some life to better live;
A virtue nobly won.

In age or feebleness, we may
In good books find a pleasant way
To spend the passing hours;
In them companionship may find,
To soothe the heart, exalt the mind,
And make their value ours.

Or in companionship with friend,
Harmonious, the hours may spend
As kindred spirits can:
In converse often sorrows heal,
And oft God's fatherhood we feel,
In fellowship with man.

Not to forget we're surely bless'd,
And find in life our truest rest,
When by His precepts led;
Find in communion with our Friend,
His strength will with our weakness blend,
And smooth the path we tread.

However busy, we will miss
Our highest good and surest bliss,
If we should put above

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Our Great Creator, the love of gain,
Lower our lives for love so vain;
Forgetting His great love.

We'd surely find, as passed the years,
And earthly gains increased our cares,
How sore our need of Him.
A "busy idleness" we'd find
Had filled our lives, dwarfed soul and mind:
Find cherished hopes grow dim.

Resulting from an idle life,
The consequences must be rife
In the eternal world;
For, in this life, He's made us free,
To weave the woof that is to be,
In after life, unfurl'd.

Now to conclude, as best we can,
Find universal is the plan
Of labor for our good.
That idleness abnormal is,
And labor is a part of His
Great plan, scarce understood.

That work for self, and self alone,
Our Heav'nly Father does not own,
Nor bless if we thus live;

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

That we must help our fellow-man,
And we fulfill our Father's plan
Most by the help we give:

And give to those who can't repay,
And thus His high commands obey,
And thus we work for Him.
And now some truths to you I've told,
Truths, when the morning stars, now old,
First sung their morning hymn.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

MY FRIEND IS GONE

DEATH claimed my friend, the good, the pure.
Mem'ry of her will long endure
In many lives: lives she consol'd,
With cheering words or help, untold.

In love, she chid the erring one;
Oft gave ere need its plea begun:
Gave even love, in some dark hour,
When human love is as a tower
Of refuge to the heart. Many are
The lives she blessed. A guiding star
She was to those who sought the best:
A solace to hearts that sought for rest.

As hearts, bereaved, will turn to pray,
Bereaved, we turn in thought to-day,
And call to mind her sweet, young face,
The beauty of her queenly grace;
And learn, perchance we only guess,
How other lives our life may bless;
Or how our life a strength may give,
To help some life to better live.

COMPENSATION

F'LIES low the lark with crippled wing,
Yet it may just as sweetly sing,
As when it sung, and highest flew
Up into heaven's matchless blue;
And dropt to earth its sweetest lay
And softly singing, flew away.

The broken flower to earth low laid,
By springing bird or tread of maid;
Thus bending low, with odors sweet,
May purpling morn or ev'ning greet;
Or lady, choosing it, may wear
It on her breast in beauty there.

The grieved and broken-hearted may,
Yet cheerful, tread this pilgrim way:
Oft hopes assuage, oft fate is kind,
And virtue calms the troubled mind;
And He, who watches bird and flower,
Forgets us not in darkest hour.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

ABOUT GREAT MODERN STORES

THE people come, and move around
As if on some enchanted ground;
Some fairy-lands these stores must be,
So much of beauty we can see.

The colors are profusely spread,
And over all soft light is shed;
While, here and there, the gleams of day
Come glinting through from far away.

We're often told they're marts of trade,
In gorgeous colors thus array'd.
Most human needs in them we find,
With much to raise the human mind

To truer thoughts and nobler aims,
And to enforce the higher claims
The soul doth have o'er earthly needs;
And thus to better living leads.

In all the world you would do well,
To find as good and none excel.
They're counted of our country's pride,
Their trade is continental wide.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

'Tis here friends meet, talk old times o'er,
Or part, mayhap, to meet no more.
Here tears of gladness sometimes flow,
Or tearful blessings friends bestow.

In town or country, far or near,
The women think they have no peer;
At home they show, oft with much pride,
The things here bought to dress the bride:

Or brought to gladden father old,
Who prizes love now more than gold;
Or for some mother, faithful guide,
Who, years ago, was too a bride:

Or brought for little girls and boys,
Some useful things or jolly toys;
Who, old, will tell of things they wore,
Bought in some great and modern store.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

PUER ET CANIS

HE was my dog, was common dog,
No pedigree had he;
To run with me he was agog,
And glad and happy we.

We ran, we played, in sun and shade,
He barked in very glee;
Such fun we had, it truly made
Our lives a jubilee.

He waded with me in the pond,
Did in the water swim,
To bring the sticks from out beyond
That I threw in for him.

Our jolly times, in mem'ry blends,
With happy days for me,
When he and I were best of friends—
And best of friends were we.

Were friends untrue, in th' long ago?
Are mem'ries often sad?
There is one thing I truly know,
That one true friend I've had

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

THERE IS LAW IN EVERYTHING

THE law of condemnation and of grace,
The mystic law that moulds the human face
Divine. The high law of our high estate,
Our after life beyond the reach of fate:
Save only conscious sin that life can blight,
And turn intended day to endless night.

The wondrous law that holds the rolling spheres,
Along their circling lines, through nameless years
Of measured time. The laws of ocean, wood;
Of streams, and hills, and plains, and all the good
That kindly nature spreads upon our earth
For sustenance and health. The law of birth,
The law of death, of growth and of decay—
Inexorable laws all things obey,
Save deathless human souls, free to rebel,
May choose in heav'n, or far from heav'n, to dwell.

'Tis by a kindly law that love doth hold
Our hearts to kindred hearts: not reason cold,
Nor any earthly strength we may command,
So strong as it. 'Tis love directs the hand
That soothes and moves the heart that for us feels;

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

For us more than for all, and feeling, steals
Away much of the bitter, piercing sting
That loss, and sorrow, and bereavements bring.
And beauty charms, harmonious with love,
And gives a joy we feel must live above
This life, where, e'en by law, if beauties fade
Renew, by law, for coming beauty made.

We joy in springing grass and blooming flow'rs,
The songs of birds in early morning hours,
When dews bespangle, and each grassy spear
A sphere of shining water bears, as clear
As crystal, formed by the changeless law
That formed the world—our beaut'ous world He saw
Was good; and oft its beauties touch the heart
With feelings that, for us, they form a part
With book divine, and lead us to a true
Regard for Him who gives, not to the few
Alone, but to us all His wondrous law—
His law of Love, through which the seers foresaw
The coming of the promised One who came
In love, above all law, the Saving Name.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

SLANDERERS AND TATTLERS

'TIS like you know them well I ween,
They like in public to be seen
And learn what has befell.
If old, or young, or short, or tall;
Or fat, or lean, you know them all;
As they their tattle tell.

They know the gossip of the town,
And tell it all, with nod or frown,
Or simulated moan.
The smallest tattle they may hear,
When they tell to some willing ear,
Prodigiously is grown.

And should some soul a little stray
From path of rectitude, then they
Are in the highest glee;
And telling over what they know,
So rapidly they make it grow;
Awful it seems to be.

O lovely maids and wives beware,
And husbands too should have a care,
When tattlers to you roam;

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

For likely it will be their plan,
To learn of gossip all they can,
To tell about your home—

Your home, your dearest place on earth,
With loved ones sharing joys and mirth,
Or sorrows meekly borne:
The tattlers come, on tattle dwell,
Away, of you they tattle tell;
Your home is made to mourn

Along with those who tempt the pure,
The innocent from virtue lure,
They happy homes do blast.
“Old Nickie” they most surely please,
On them, ’tis sure, he’ll surely seize;
May get them all at last.

And you may think, no doubt you will.
If conscience does not sometimes fill
Their souls with dreadful fear;
And thus put some restraint upon
Their tattling talk that does, anon,
Cost homes and good names dear.

E’en they may tell to them how dear
Religion is, and make it clear
To heaven they will go;

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

But if they should, you will agree
That they dissatisfied might be;
No occupation know.

For chance to slander they might grieve,
And ready they might be to leave
The happy home above;
In Hades find their daddy true,
And all vile talk on earth they knew;
And all the lies they love.

From tattlers, Lord, help us to turn,
For we in truth most truly learn,
That we will sure debase
Ourselves, by thinking of the low;
But into goodness surely grow,
If truly we efface,

From mind and heart, thoughts that disease,
And try with diligence to seize
The highest and the best;
And to possess the good and pure,
In thought and heart, for these make sure
A life that's truly bless'd.

We cannot know, less understand,
Why Father does, in worldly land,
Allow so much of sin;

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

Or tattlers should distress the pure;
Or we temptation must endure,
Ere heaven we may win.

But He knows best and we do know
That from resistance strength does grow,
And we the stronger be,
If we o'ercome when tempted are;
Then He leads us, true Bethl'hem star,
And leading, makes us free.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

A PRAYER

FATHER, I pray for quiet days,
And pray from sickness to be free;
And may Thy precepts guide my ways
That I may be at peace with Thee.

I pray for home, my heart it woos,
For here is found earth's truest love;
Home oft our fainting heart renews;
On earth, begins the heaven above.

Give me true friends that do abide,
In loss and sorrow ever found;
In need, to find the true and tried
A refuge from the shafts that wound.

Give to my life its times of bloom,
The frosts of death come swiftly on
And bear me swiftly to the tomb—
Be Thou my staff to lean upon.

Keep me from low, ignoble strife,
And purer thoughts weave, day by day,
Some threads of gold in woof of life
That life may golden be, I pray.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

And gratitude be in my heart
To Thee, from whom all blessings flow;
Much is the good Thou dost impart,
And every good to Thee we owe.

And yet my Father, well I know
All earthly good I've prayed for here
I should be willing to forego,
If 'tis Thy will, however dear.

Then help me pray Thy will be done,
And learn to make Thy will my own;
And if of earthly good scarce none,
Learn to love Thee for Thee alone.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

AS YEARS GO ON ·

OF, as the years go on apace,
We call to mind the form and face
Of some dear one that we,
To see again, and call by name,
Would truer live and gladly claim
The life that is to be.

Our loved ones gone who used to be
They're dear in happy memory,
And cherished in the heart.
Our love for parents never dies,
Though long ago, with closed eyes,
They went the way apart.

Our lips cry out, come back! but we
Feel only silence, ceaselessly,
O'er us it seems to roll;
No more they answer to our call,
And deeper loneliness doth fall
Upon the lonely soul.

We stood before the door of Death,
A moment oped at parting breath,
And in a moment closed;

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

We followed th' loved with streaming eyes,
We called to them with heart-break cries—
But silent Death enclosed.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

NO LOVER CAME

I WAITED long, no lover came,
My heart with waiting weary grew,
Was not a lover then my due?
A lover then my love to claim?

Was I not pure, was I not fair?
As waiting, I did wait in vain,
Until my heart bore deeper pain;
As in my place I waited there.

O where's my lover? I would know!
O! somewhere must my lover be,
For somewhere must be love for me;
My constant heart oft tells me so.

Did he sail th' sea, or march to war?
O cruel war! O gormand sea!
To take my lover thus from me;
Alone, 'twas him I waited for.

My ideal lover, good and pure,
My maiden heart oft pictured so,
And loved in thought a fancied beau—
Such loving makes the heart so poor.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

My raven hair is silvered now,
But still my heart for love is fain,
The want of love yet gives it pain;
And furrows deep my wrinkled brow.

They tell us that in fairest land,
There equal all we'll happy be;
But equal can it be for me?
How equal I scarce understand.

For even there may I alone,
Still watch and wait and lonely be;
No lover there with love for me—
Or may I there a lover own?

O happy thought! where hearts find rest,
May be there by some silver sea,
My lover, watching, waits for me;
As if alone with me he's bless'd.

Where love supreme will ever be,
And all earth's sorrows find surcease,
And all of human heart-breaks cease;
And lovers love eternally.

Yet o'er and o'er the thought will come,
If, somehow, I the choice might make,
The heav'nly or the earthly take;
My choice to be love's higher sum,

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

I can but think my choice would be,
A lover I might have on earth,
A lover here of human worth—
For am I not "humanity"?

THE FRIEND OF MY YOUTH

TURN back, O Time, thy ceaseless flight,
Give impulse youthful as I write
Of thee, my early friend.
What chance or fate made us to stay
Our growing friendship in the day
When youth's delights attend?

But my true friend, I think of thee,
Thy heart did often turn to me,
This truly do I know:
As thou didst early trust in me,
So did my heart rely on thee;
In days so long ago.

Why were our hearts thus made to feel
The wounds that time could only heal?
In time, we cannot know.
Our love, a thought could only be
Both sad and sweet to thee and me;
Through life it has been so.

And thus our love we put to rest
In heart and soul, as seemèd best
To thee and me, my friend.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

In mem'ry I will cherish thee,
And soul shall thus the purer be;
And life its living mend.

For heart and soul, where love doth rest,
Will make the life more truly bless'd,
And even joys impart:
And mem'ry thus a gladness brings,
As, from right living, joy upsprings
In every human heart.

Now thou art gone, and well I know
The wine of life with me runs low,
As drop by drop it falls,
And soon the chalice will be dry—
A drainless chalice by and by,
For every soul that calls.

For us, may be, all's for the best,
For He who guards the sparrow's nest,
And sees the sparrow fall
To every life's a guard and guide;
And in His love all may abide,
In answer to His call.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

A HAPPY LIFE

TO name the things that truly make
For us a happy life, we find
That labor, for a loved one's sake,
Oft gives contentment to the mind.

A table spread with wholesome fare,
And grateful hearts for all indeed;
A willingness with want to share,
And kindred feel to all in need.

And hearts unmarred by grudge or strife,
And neither hate, nor love of wrong;
And daily add some good to life—
By cheerfulness, our lives prolong.

Some one to love, some work to do,
Some mission in our lives to fill,
And always good to hope for too;
Some lasting good try to fulfill.

And not forget for whom we're made,
For whom our hearts are restless till
They rest in Him—in Him obey'd—
Finding deep peace within His will.

THE BLUE HEN'S CHICKENS

If loss and grief our lives assail,
And much of hoped-for good is past,
Yet, sweeter comfort will not fail
If love for God our hearts hold fast.

If faith in God with us remain,
And love for Him remain our own,
They'll lead us to life's higher gain
In loving God "for God alone."

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